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KOREA • Issue 85 / November 2013

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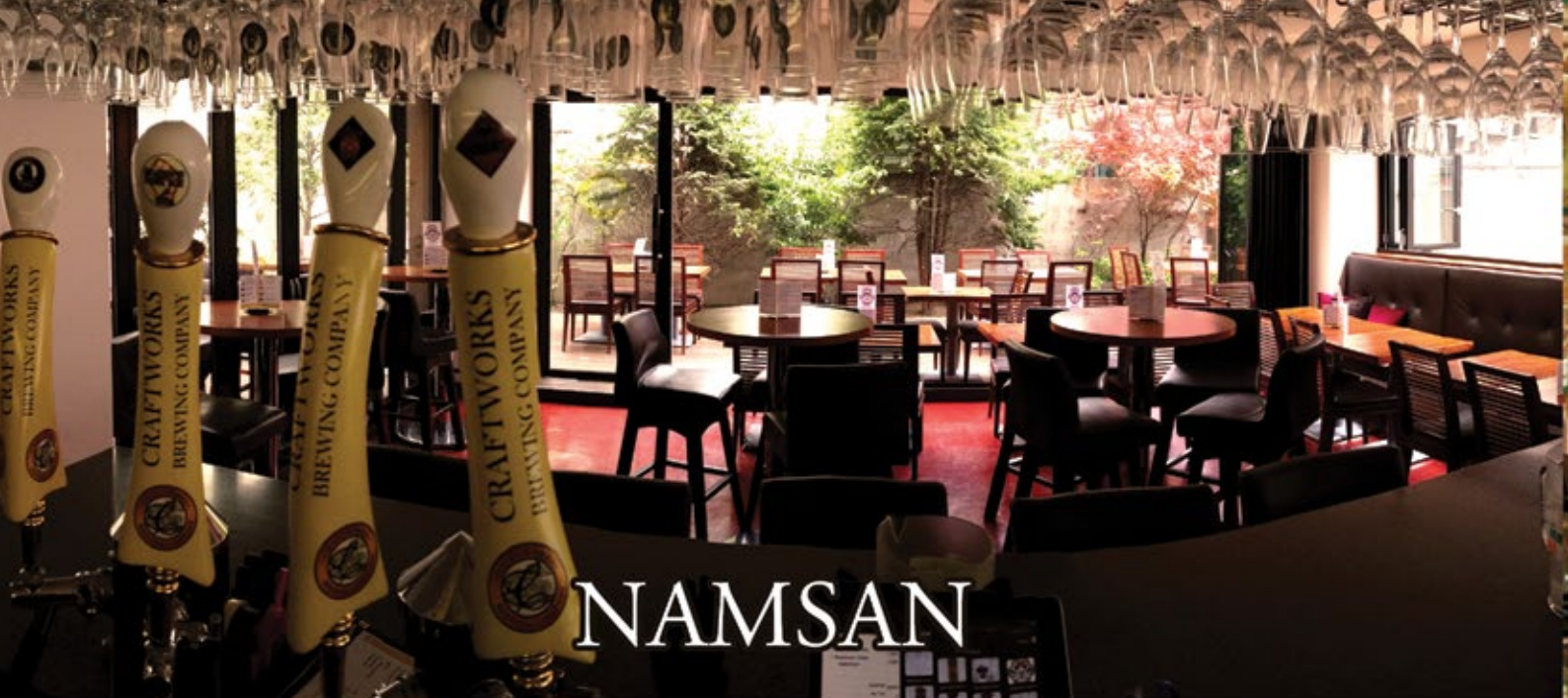
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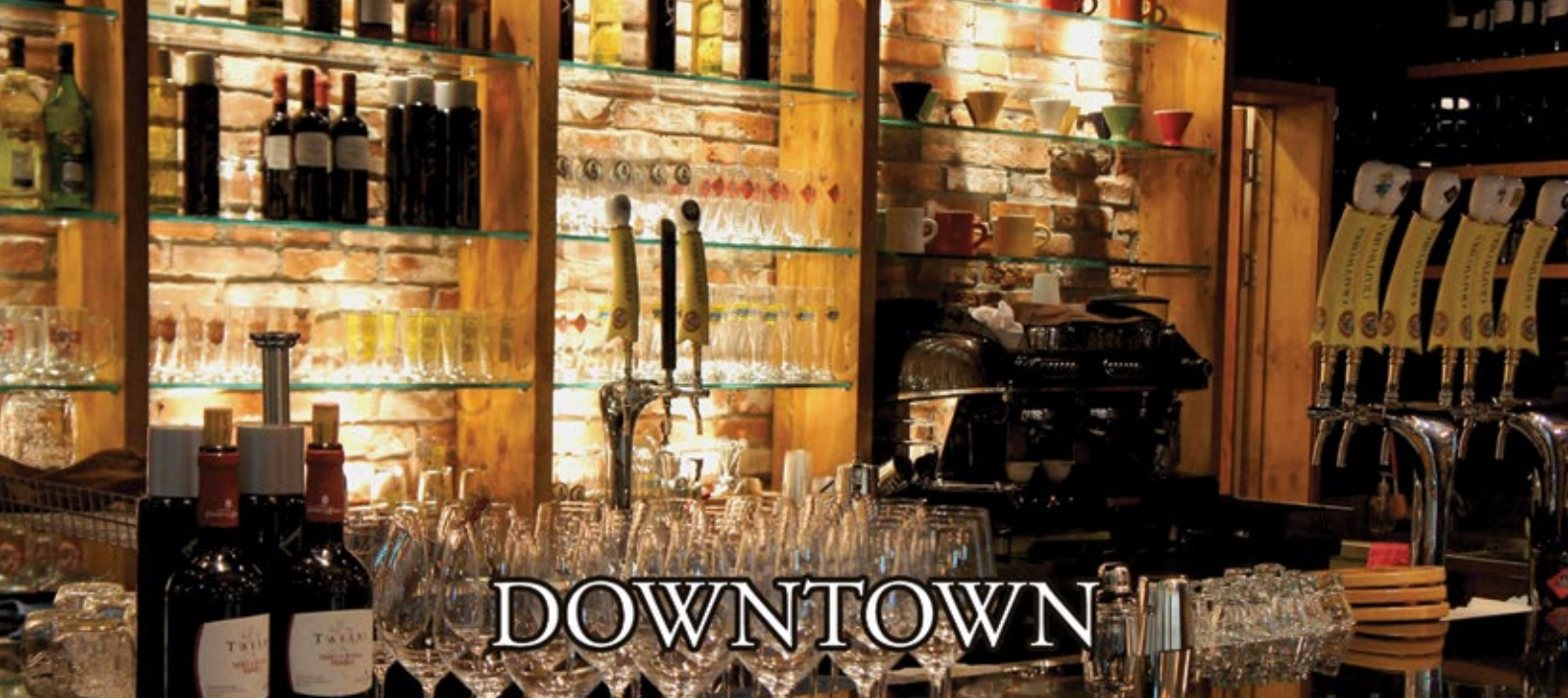


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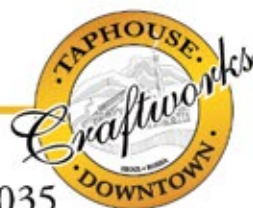
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ONWARD AND UPWARD

EDITORIAL

By Elaine Ramirez, Editorial Director

One of Groove Korea's most difficult times in recent months involved Matt Lamers telling me to get lost.

The editor-in-chief and I were arguing over the editing on a feature I had been writing for tireless months, and that he had spent days revising. We both wanted the perfect story but we didn't agree on how to get there. There were strong words, bruised egos and, at one point, threats of scrapping the project altogether.

After a year of dedication to the magazine, I almost did take his suggestion to get lost. But that month, everything that could go wrong did. After putting off the story and having plans B and C fall through, not to mention turmoil in our respective personal lives, we found ourselves back at square one. I could have left and given up, but I knew we both believed that the story was too important not to finish.

The task at hand had us holed up in the office until 1 a.m. on a weeknight. It was cold and raining, and we were sleep-deprived and miserable. We were both at our weakest, yet we had no choice but to stick it out and work together to close the issue. The end result was "Is Korea's EFL education failing?" (March 2013), which became one of our most representative cover stories and, with a lot of help, one of my personal best.

Our perseverance marked a turning point in our working relationship. What could have shattered our trust in each other ended up reinforcing it, as we mutually understood that we both would not, could not give up on our mission. And in the following months, this team has produced some of our proudest work.

The episode reminded me that if you want the best, it is impossible to attain it alone. And that's what Matt brought out of his team: His vision for the highest standards of journalism and truly thought-provoking content pushed us to achieve things together that we didn't realize were possible, which in turn inspired us to push our own writers even more.

We also learned to push our readers to consider ideas that, to our knowledge, have gone largely ignored by other English-language publications: We have covered Korea's stressed masses, its xenophobic media and its teen suicide epidemic. We have argued that Korea must

change its discriminatory AIDS testing policies for foreign teachers, and we have spotlighted Korea's need to put aside any nationalistic strife to help its easterly neighbor in times of devastation, as well as Japan's own obligation to atone for its wartime sex slavery.

Seven years ago, Groove's covers featured cupcakes and puppies, as long-time readers can attest. We've come a long way since then, and we aren't stopping there. This month, writer Anita McKay dives into the world of migrant marriage brokering, and the respected news provider Daily NK has joined forces with Groove to reveal to our readers the secrets and truths of the elusive North Korea.

With the solid foundation that Groove has established over Matt's 31 issues at the helm, I believe the best is not behind us. Our team has more ambition than ever to stand as the best publication in Korea.

To achieve this goal, we have brought on media veteran Craig White, who cofounded Daegu Pockets magazine and launched the regional newspaper InDaegu, and who sought to put Korea at the fingertips of every English speaker through the wiki portal Galbijim. As our new executive director, Craig brings his diverse experience to our team and his visions for a Groove that is bigger than just a magazine. On top of him helping to expand our presence in the community both offline and online, his ambitions to enhance the Groove name from a single publication to a wide-ranging media group will hopefully steer us toward a brighter, more prosperous future.

That means you will see within our pages and on our website several new features over the next few months as we adapt to the changes in both the media and the market. But whatever those changes are, our essence will remain the same, and we will do all we can to continue Groove Korea's two-fold purpose: to pursue journalism of the highest integrity and to share with our readers the good, the bad and everything in between of the Korea that we have come to know and love.

On behalf of all the editors of Groove Korea, past and present, I thank you for your continued support. We hope that you will continue to stand with us in the years to come.

HOT ON: WWW.GROOVEKOREA.COM

Destinations

Discover the haunts of chilly Cheorwon

The winter months are often viewed as a lackluster time for domestic travel, but there are several destinations that strangely lend themselves to being experienced during the deep freeze on the peninsula. The small town of Cheorwon in Gangwon Province is such a place, nestled partly in no-man's land right beneath the DMZ. The old town's scattered remnants make it one of the most haunting locations in the country.

The town was formerly a major transportation hub, with a railway servicing the entire length of the peninsula, and connecting the country along its east-west axis from Seoul to the sea. Now the lonely station of Sintanni is the end of the line, and the whole the area feels eerily quiet. Among the rusting industrial components at the now-defunct Woljeong-ni Station which served the Seoul-Gangwon line, a train sits destroyed by American artillery. A sign hangs from it with the words "The iron horse wants to run" scrawled across, giving a sense of life to the long-dead relic, and conjuring thoughts of reunification.

Story by Ian Henderson

Read it online in November or in print in December

Music & Arts

Short-term street art

"I tend to make all my art really big and really impractical," Jesse Olwen says, peering over a painting he's about to temporarily install under the Hangang Bridge. Chasing the sunrise on foot, the Canadian artist delicately maneuvers the artwork, which straddles the line between street art and still life, as he crosses Seoul's sidewalks to the chosen spot.

Painted in acrylic on plywood board, the artwork entitled "Til Death" juxtaposes graffiti-style tagging and finely detailed flowers. "This piece is a gift to my soon-to-be wife. The text reads 'til death' and I've chosen her favorite flower, pink gardenias, as the subject. We met in Korea, so it was important for me to create and install the piece here. Normally my work isn't involved with my personal life like this, but you know artists are sensitive creatures and all. I wanted to create a piece that was powerful and arresting, for her."

Story by Remy Raitt

Read it online in November or in print in December



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CHARACTER: Fills your mouth with a fusion of toasty malt and sweet caramel up front finishing with a nutty flavour, medium creamy carbonation.



STYLE: Wheat Ale.
COLOUR: Golden yellow.
KEY INGREDIENTS: Three types of pale and wheat malts.
CHARACTER: Light on the palate, yet packed with flavour and European hop aroma, with fruity or citrusy notes.



STYLE: Dark Lager.
COLOUR: Amber with white, billowy head.
KEY INGREDIENTS: Blend of pale and caramel malts, as well as honey from Three Hills, and two varieties of hops.
CHARACTER: Sweet and honey/molasses flavour, slightly hopped with fuller mouth feel.



STYLE: Brown Ale.
COLOUR: Warm reddish light brown.
KEY INGREDIENTS: Blend of pale, caramel and black malts and a blend of three hop varieties.
CHARACTER: Malty with a hint of toffee balanced with very evident hop and followed by a clean finish.



STYLE: India Pale Ale.
COLOUR: Golden amber.
KEY INGREDIENTS: British-style hops known as Fuggles. Seriously.
CHARACTER: A classic ale dry hopped to lend a distinctive character. Spicy warm, earthy.



STYLE: Scottish Style Heavy Ale.
COLOUR: Bronze with toffee tones.
KEY INGREDIENTS: Pale malt, caramel malt, peated malt, munich malt, hops.
CHARACTER: Strong and full bodied with a complex mix of toffee, caramel, vanilla and a hint of peat.



STYLE: Irish Red Ale.
COLOUR: Caramel coloured with a reddish hue.
KEY INGREDIENTS: Blend of pale, caramel and black malts, and three varieties of hops.
CHARACTER: Sweet and hoppy, caramel and dark fruity plum notes.



STYLE: Light lime Lager.
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INSIGHT



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DISPATCHING THE SECRETS OF NORTH KOREA

Daily NK digs up the dangerous truths of the communist state.

INSIGHT

THE BUSINESS OF BUYING A BRIDE
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North Korea is not a belligerent outlier throwing verbal grenades from behind a gigantic firewall of ignorance. Daily NK's Christopher Green reveals what they're really up to.

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Hyunwoo Sun from Talk To Me In Korean shares nine innovative ways to digitally enhance your Korean learning with just your smartphone and the internet.

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Expats getting loans and financing in Korea has long been a road full of obstacles. Shinhan Bank's Paul Sharkie shows how to jump them.

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Dave Hazzan brings you into the outstanding, head-splitting, pogo-jumping, slamming-into-your-neighbor hardcore music of Yuppier Killer.

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INSIGHT



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48 HOURS OF MOVIE MADNESS

The 48 Hour Film Project returns for its fourth installment in Seoul, bringing aspiring and professional filmmakers together to make a short film in a frantic, sleep-deprived campaign.

FOOD AND DRINK

THE SORDID TALE OF SOJU

Soju: two syllables that conjure up a Dickensian best and worst of Korea. It is the world's best-selling liquor, and not just by a few bottles.



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FOOD & DRINK

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Nestled in the side streets of Gangnam, Brooklyn – The Burger Joint is a welcome relief from the sweet, Korean-style burgers typically found in Seoul.

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Versatile, cheap and fantastically easy to prepare, soup is your best friend when you clomp home with the wind at your back, starving and cranky.

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Bob and Trish Evans are more than just jugglers – they joggle and swuggle, too.

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Little Travellers Korea puts on Rubber Seoul on Nov. 30, sponsored by Groove Korea.

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Leon Sparkes and Deborah Brogden's shared passion and dedication to art are reflected in the vibrant colors and motifs of their work.

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Few people on this planet will find fault with a lingerie-wearing, all-girl punk band.

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An interview with visual effects artist Dan Adams and his impact on the local film scene

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"Thor: The Dark World" (Oct. 30)
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Groove Korea Magazine 2013

KEY PEOPLE

Introducing some of the editors, writers and photographers behind November's issue.



Dylan Goldby

Australia

Dylan is a passionate photographer who loves to speak in the third person. Knee-deep in kimchi and shooting it from every angle, he has been on the peninsula for nigh on seven years now. He is a free-lancer, teacher of photography, a regular contributor to Groove Korea and a moderator at the Seoul Photo Club. He loves to work with other photographers in the never-ending task of photographing Korea. Dylan contributes the monthly photography column "Capturing Korea."

Craig White

Canada

A busy husband and father, Craig considers himself to be a marketing nut first, and a content developer and planner a close second. This unique balance helps bring a new dimension to Groove, when coupled with his past 11 years of living in Seoul, Daegu, Ulsan and some goshiwons that are smaller than a walk-in closet. Craig is Groove's Executive Director.



Jenny Na

U.S.

Jenny is a Korean adoptee with an interest in human rights and social justice issues. Outside of that, she's in the kitchen making blended beverages, in the yoga studio, at the pool or on the computer, planning her next trip to oceans near and far. Jenny is Groove's Community Editor.

Sabrina Hill

Canada

Sabrina is a photographer on film sets for major and indie films. A native of Toronto, she has been in Korea for just over seven years. She has a degree in political science from Brock University and runs the Center for Strategy and Peace in Korea, a Seoul-based nongovernmental organization. Ask her a question about North Korea and be prepared for a long-winded treatise. Sabrina contributed "Dispatching the secrets of North Korea" this month.



Dirk Schlottmann

Germany

Born in in Mainz, Germany, Dirk is an ethnologist, photographer and teacher. He has been a guest professor in the German department at the Korea National University of Education in Cheongju since September 2010. He loves taking on projects on his travels to learn more about the surprising and subtle similarities between cultures. Dr. Schlottmann shoots the photos for the "Rock 'n' Roll Seoul" column.



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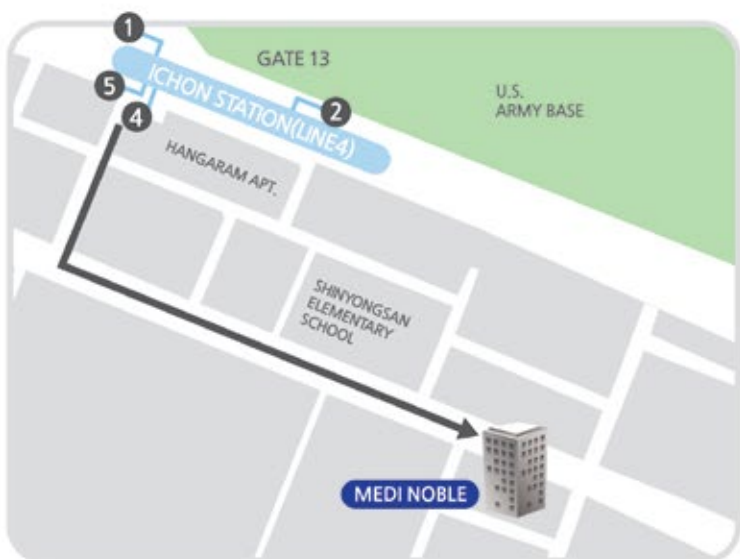
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THE INBOX

Groove readers' opinions and feedback.

ON 'KOREA'S DYING STUDENTS' (SEPTEMBER 2013)

BOB MERRIHEW (FACEBOOK)

Interesting story. I taught in International Schools on Korea for three years. I loved teaching there. I found that students were trying their hardest and that concentration made them learn better than the American students that I have taught. There were some social issues that were problematic and match the research that this author spoke about on this article. But, the fact of this new global world is that you have to learn new skills throughout their life. That will create a pressure that is unavoidable. I would say that the answer is somewhere in the middle. I would add the expected societal norms make problems easier to solve. A powerful example is America where our Federal government are so diverse in values that problems cannot be solved due to these values.

AYANNA CHARDONNAY (GROOVEKOREA.COM)

It's going to take a long time if there aren't the right outlets or attitudes to deal with something like this. It's very sad when I see my elementary school students so overworked and depressed about life. Middle schoolers talk about students who used to be in their class and then committed suicide, as though it's a normal thing. Trying to stop the bullying in an Academy Class is just as difficult as trying to stop the bullying in a public school if the goal is simply to educate and not to motivate students.

ON 'THE FEAR OF BECOMING A HOUSEWIFE' (AUGUST 2013)

CHELLE MILLE (GROOVEKOREA.COM)

I disagreed very strongly with most of this piece. I struggled to concisely explain a single one of my points of disagreement. My comments are too long and too detailed so I wrote a response piece on the Korean Gender Café 한국 젠더 카페 titled "Solidarity is for White Women in Korea, too. Re: The Fear of Becoming a Housewife." At the end of the piece I posted a lot of accessible readings about gender, Korean society, global migration, etc. that I think could add nuance to the discussion raised in this Marriage Column on Groove Magazine.

GUEST (GROOVEKOREA.COM)

interesting article and I agree with you. household equality is very important for me. My boyfriend is Korean but he is the one who cooks and does the dishes, simple because I cannot cook even the simplest things. But I try to assist him in every way so we end up doing everything together. If I manage to actually prepare food on my own, he never starts eating before me. We always wait until we are both seated. Although his mom is a typical housewife, I am very thankful on how she raised her son. The only sexism I have noticed so far is him thinking he has to pay for everything and carry all my stuff no matter how much I protest. I am a girl and therefore weak. He is my oppa and therefore he has to pay for me. I agree with it for now because I am a broke student, but this will have to change as soon as I get a job.



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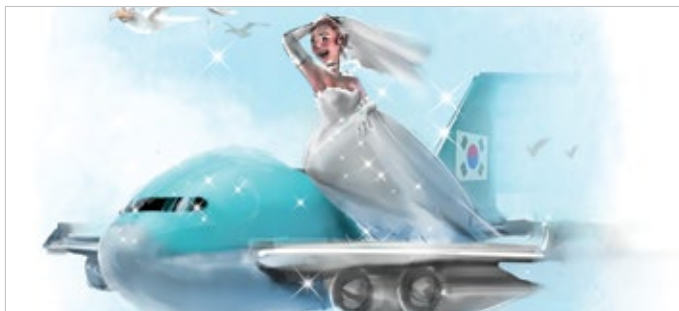
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MUST READS

The business of buying a bride Page 28

Efforts by NGOs in raising awareness of the dangers associated with migrant marriage brokers have not gone unnoticed. But with all of this controversial media attention, why do people still use them?



Daily NK: We were never on the verge of war Page 40

The public image of North Korea's new leader has been calibrated to have us dismissing the country as an inexplicable but dangerous anomaly. However, the reality is more interesting and, fortunately, far more complex.



Exploring Daejeon Page 50

Many who move to Korea are terrified that, unless they find a job in Seoul, they'll be stuck in the middle of nowhere, miles from the nearest bar, burger or foreigner. What they don't know is that there are cities like this one where you might not see a foreigner for days, but will know exactly which bar to visit to be surrounded by them.



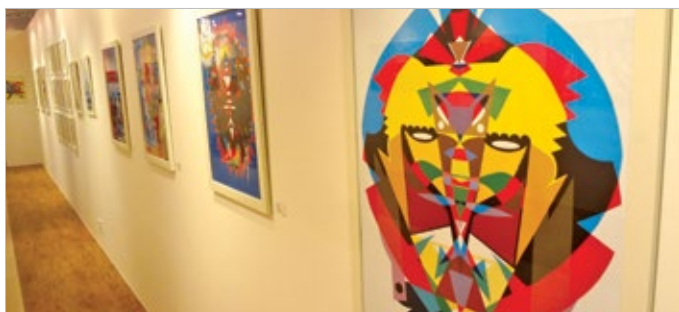
Life on the fly Page 72

The self-described "hippie athletes" met as successful college sportspeople while studying in Michigan. Once they wrapped up their collegiate sporting careers in 2007, the Evanses found themselves with an abundance of free time and unspent energy. During this time, a friend introduced them to three-ball juggling, something the pair immediately took to.



Fusion art Page 84

Solo artists Leon Sparkes and Deborah Brogden met in a bar in Birmingham, England three years ago. Their collaboration also spurred the duo on in their journey through Korea's art scene. They feed off one another's enthusiasm to produce creative works in a variety of mediums – from graffiti and digital art to music, illustrations and paintings.



Artist's Journey: Interview with Dan Adams, visual effects artist Page 90

Contributing behind the curtain of numerous expat films in Korea such as "Amiss," "The Inside" and the currently in development "Haebangchon," Dan Adams has been an indispensable asset to the film community as a VFX artist.





www.museum.go.kr

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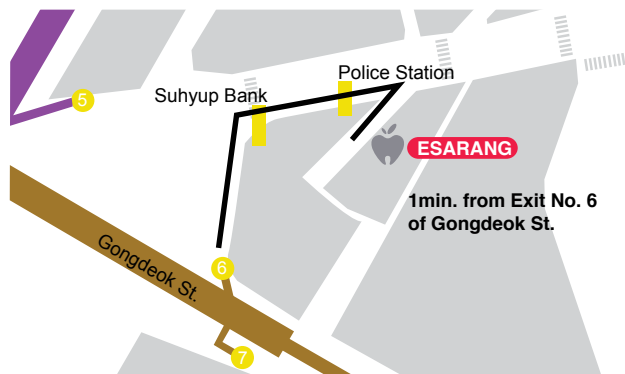
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COVER

The business of buying a bride

It's just like shopping. First, the Korean agency gathers their clients. Then, they call the madam, who gathers the women who want to marry foreign men. This is just one part of Korea's sometimes shady foreign bride industry.

Read the story on Page 28.



Cover illustration by James Kim
Design by Park Seong-eun

Our past three issues:



October 2013

7th anniversary
Self-reflection at Haeinsa
The Beatniks



September 2013

Korea's dying students
Peddling Korea
Noah Cicero



August 2013

The great outdoors
The collapse of North Korea?
Mind vs. Machine

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WHAT'S ON

FESTIVALS

LIVE MUSIC

FOOD

BARS

TOURS

SPORTS

ARTS

NETWORK

BOX OFFICE

1 - Friday

MUSIC

Busker Busker @ Olympic Park Gymnasium, Songpa-gu, Seoul; Nov. 1-2; interpark.com

FESTIVAL

Seoul Lantern Festival @ Cheonggyecheon, Seoul; to Nov. 17; seoulantenn.visit-seoul.net

FESTIVAL

Seoul Photo Festival @ Seoul Museum of Art, Seoul Museum of History; to Dec. 1; seoulphotofestival.com

2 - Saturday

PARTY

Hair Show Extraganza @ R&R Bar & Grill, Seoul; Tickets on sale now (010-4697-7013)

SPORTS

Horse Racing @ Seoul Race Park, Gwacheon, Gyeonggi-do; every Sat and Sun; kra.co.kr

ARTS

ICONZ Media and Global Arts Therapy presents-Put Your Hands Up For @ Club Flow, Itaewon

3 - Sunday

SPORTS

2013 Jungang Marathon @ Jamsil Olympic Stadium, Seoul; marathon.join.com

TOURS

Andong Hahoe Village and Bongjeongsang @ Departing from Seoul; meetup.com/globalexpats

EXHIBITIONS

Seoul International Aerospace and Defense Exhibition 2013 @ KINTEX; Nov 2-3; www.seouladex.com/eng

4 - Monday

NETWORK

LanguageCast Hongdae @ Giordano, Hongdae; meetup.com/Languagecast

NETWORK

2013 CITYNET Seoul Congress @ Seoul City Hall, Global Center; Nov. 3-6; seoul2013.citynetcongress.org

FOOD / NETWORK

Les Toques Blanches Korea @ Lotte Hotel, Downtown Seoul; Nov. 4; ltbkorea.com

5 - Tuesday

NETWORK

Tuesday Trivia Nights @ Bull & Barrel, Itaewon; sign-up @ 9p; facebook.com/BullnBarrelSeoul

CHARITY

SIWA and Diplomatic Community Bazaar @ Seoul Museum of History; siwapage.com

SPORTS / FOOD

Melbourne Cup Luncheon 2013 @ Grand Hyatt Seoul; anzakorea.com

6 - Wednesday

FESTIVAL

Makgeolli Expo @ COEX, Seoul; to Nov. 9; makgeolliexpo.co.kr

HAPPY HOUR

English teacher's night (Wed.) @ Big Rock in Gangnam; 10% off for teachers; bigrockbeer.co.kr

HAPPY HOUR

Yellow Taxi - Cheap Cocktail Night, every Wed @ Dunsan-dong, Daejeon

7 - Thursday

FESTIVAL

Bangeo Festival @ Moseulpo Port, Jeju; to Nov. 11; bangeofestival.com

FESTIVAL

Asiana International Short Film Festival @ Gwanghwamun, Seoul; to Nov. 12; www.facebook.com/AISFF

BOX OFFICE

'Safe Haven' opening in theaters nationwide; cineinkorea.com

8 - Friday

MUSIC

Herbie Hancock @ Chungmu Art Hall, Seoul; interpark.com

MUSIC

Shigeto @ Horus Music Garage, Daegu

9 - Saturday

FESTIVAL

Cheongsong Apple Festival @ Cheongsong-gun, Gyeongsangbuk-do; to Nov. 11; eng.cs.go.kr

EXPO

Food Week Korea 2013 @ COEX, Seoul; Nov. 6-9; foodweek.info

10 - Sunday

MUSIC

Rose Motel @ Olympic Park, Seoul; interpark.com

MUSIC

One Ok Rock @ UNIQLO-AX, Seoul; interpark.com

11 - Monday

ARTS

The Musical - Notre Dame De Paris @ Blue Square Musical Hall, Seoul; to Nov. 17; interpark.com

ARTS

Ballerina Who Loved a B-Boy @ Kyoungnyang Art Hill, Seoul; to Nov. 30; interpark.com

The 48 Hour Film Project Seoul 2013, sponsored by Groove Korea, kicks off Nov. 29. See our story on Page 86



Groove Korea is proudly sponsoring the Canadian Ball Hockey League and all their exciting games and events listed in our calendar.

12 - Tuesday

MUSIC

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra @ Seoul Arts Center; Nov. 11-12; sac.or.kr

13 - Wednesday

ARTS

Fuerza Bruta Original Team in Korea @ Jamsil Sports Complex; to Dec. 31; interpark.com

FOOD

Wing night (Wed.) @ Dillinger's, Itaewon; facebook.com/dillingersseoul

14 - Thursday

MUSIC

Galaxy Express, DeliSpice @ Incheon Central Art Hall; indistreet.com

BOX OFFICE

'The Flowers of War' opening in theaters nationwide; cineinkorea.com



For suggestions or comments,
email events@groovekorea.com

*All the events published in this calendar are subject to unforeseen changes by the promoters. Groove Korea does not take responsibility for any misunderstandings or third party damage.

15 - Friday

DANCE

Korea Balboa Weekend @ Sejong Center; to Nov. 17; 12,000 won; koreabalboa.com.

COMEDY

Stand Up Seoul presents Ben Kronberg and Baron Vaughn @ Renaissance Seoul Hotel; standupseoul@gmail.com

16 - Saturday

MUSIC

2013 Korea Japan Punk Festival @ Prism Hall, Seoul

MUSIC

Sublime Retreat, feat. Asian Chairshot and SMACKSOFT @ 1984, Hongdae, Seoul; interpark.com

17 - Sunday

SPORTS

2013 YTN Sohn Kee Chung Marathon; Seoul Olympic Stadium; www.sonkeechungrun.com

18 - Monday

FOOD

Wing night (Mon.) @ Craftworks, Noksapyeong; craftworkstaphouse.com

19 - Tuesday

DRINKS

All-you-can-drink beer to 7p with meal order (Mon., Tue.) @ Big Rock, Gangnam; 10,000 won

20 - Wednesday

ARTS

Picasso de Malaga, Picasso Absoluto @ Seoul Arts Center; to Nov. 24; picassoabsoluto.com

DRINKS

2500 won vodka & rum wells (Wed.) @ Bombay Lounge, Daegu; facebook.com/pages/Bombay-Lounge

21 - Thursday

BOX OFFICE

'Hunger Games: Catching Fire' opening in theaters nationwide; cineinkorea.com

OPERA

Carmen @ National Theatre of Korea, Seoul; meetup.com/Opera-Fans-of-Seoul

22 - Friday

MUSIC

Polaris, Wedance @ Kuchu-camp, Sinchon, Seoul; indistreet.com

MUSIC

Taro Hakase, Amaury Vassili @ Sejong Center for the Performing Arts, Seoul; interpark.com

23 - Saturday

MUSIC

Dark Moor Live in Seoul @ Club Crack, Hongdae; metalcd.co.kr

24 - Sunday

ARTS

The Musical Bibap @ Bibap Theater; to Dec. 31; 40,000-60,000 won; www.bibap.co.kr



Katniss is back! Check out our article (Page 92) on 'The Hunger Games: Catching Fire', which opens on Nov. 21 in Korea.

25 - Monday

DRINKS

All-you-can-drink beer to 7p with meal order (Mon., Tue.) @ Big Rock, Gangnam; 10,000 won

ARTS

LIFE Picture Collection @ Sejong Center for the Performing Arts; seelife.co.kr; to Nov. 25. Last chance to see it!

26 - Tuesday

ARTS

Mamma Mia! @ Blue Square Musical Hall, Seoul; to March 23; interpark.com

MUSIC

EFTERKLANG @ Rolling Hall, Seoul; supercolorsuper.com

27 - Wednesday

ARTS

'Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter at Cheonggyecheon' Photo Exhibition @ Cheonggyecheon Museum; to Nov. 10; www.cgcm.go.kr

28 - Thursday

ARTS

The Musical Le Passe-Muraille @ Hongik University Daehakro Art Center; Nov. 13-Jan. 26; interpark.com

FESTIVAL

Seoul Independent Film Festival @ CGV Apgujeong, INDIESPACE; Nov. 28-Dec. 6; siff.or.kr

BOX OFFICE

'Gambit' opening in theaters nationwide; cineinkorea.com

29 - Friday

EXPO

Digital Media Fair 2013 @ COEX; Nov. 27-29; digimfair.or.kr

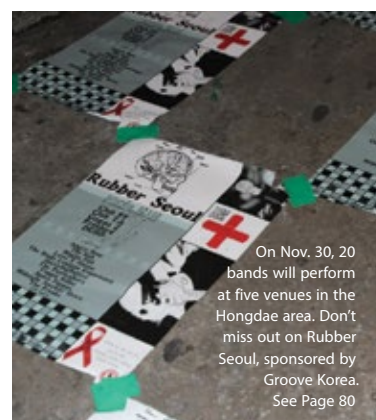
ARTS

The 48 Hour Film Project @ JR BBQ, Itaewon; to Dec. 1; 48hourfilm.com/en/seoul

30 - Saturday

MUSIC

Heineken Presents Sensation @ Ilsan KINTEX; interpark.com



On Nov. 30, 20 bands will perform at five venues in the Hongdae area. Don't miss out on Rubber Seoul, sponsored by Groove Korea. See Page 80



KOREA JOONGANG DAILY

In association with *International New York Times*

NATIONAL NEWS with GROOVE

November 2013 / www.koreajoongangdaily.com

PEEPING TOMS AND SMARTPHONES ARE A BAD MATCH

Mr. Lee is 31, works at an IT company, and has a 2-month-old daughter. Life is going pretty well for him, except for a rather nasty hobby he has developed: taking pictures up women's skirts.

Around 6 p.m. on Sept. 24, Lee was pacing restlessly near an escalator at Seoul Station filled with rush hour commuters. Lee positioned his smartphone on top of his briefcase, held in place by the zipper, and started following a young woman in a purple miniskirt. He stood behind her on the escalator and swung his bag under her skirt. The smartphone was blinking, signaling that it was filming. Three police officers had spotted Lee, Sergeant Park Se-hong grabbed his phone.

"What were you filming?" Park asked.

"What are you talking about?" Lee replied. "I didn't film anything!"

Park found the clip of the woman's purple skirt. He also found a picture of Lee's infant daughter. "Aren't you ashamed?" Park asked.

Lee sunk to his knees and begged for the policemen's mercy. "I don't know what got into me," he said. "Please forgive me. I don't want to be a shameful father for my daughter."

From Sept. 24 to 27, the JoongAng Ilbo accompanied a subway police patrol unit specializing in capturing peepers using hidden cameras to get naughty pictures.

It's a growing problem. According to data submitted by the National Police Agency to Representative You Dae-woon of the Democratic Party, 2,132 crimes associated with hidden cameras took place during the first half of this year, an average of 12 cases a day.

In 2008, 953 cases were reported, but the number went up to 3,314 last year. Adult sites on the internet are dedicated to stills and video clips taken in subway cars, station escalators and public toilets.

From 2008 till June this year, the largest number of the crimes took place in Jung District, Seoul; 703 cases were reported in the area. Seoul Station, where Lee was apprehended last month, was a mecca for the crime. In 2011 and in June and August of last year, 85 cases were reported there. During the four-day stakeout with the police, the JoongAng Ilbo witnessed two apprehensions, including Lee's. According to the police, about three to four offenders a month are apprehended.

The most popular locations for peepers, police say, are Seoul Station, Gangnam Station, Express Bus Terminal Station and Daerim Station. They all have long escalators and good lighting and they're busy, with up to 200,000 commuters daily.

Aside from train and subway stations, peepers also like to take pictures in the windows of neigh-

boring houses and apartment buildings, especially when the windows of bathrooms are left open during summer time. The fourth-most common locale is in subway cars.

Under a special law regarding sex crimes, offenders who are found guilty of so-called "upskirt" photography face jail terms of up to five years and fines of up to 10 million won.

Some analysts say the punishments are too light to deter to the behavior.

"Smartphones have increasingly better video functions and crimes involving hidden cameras are on the rise," said Lee Soo-jung, a criminal psychology professor at Kyonggi University.

"But most offenders are given suspended sentences. The slap-on-the-wrist punishment is a problem. 'Most offenders who used hidden cameras are average office workers,' Lee continued.

"Their need to escape from a rigid social hierarchy is being expressed in abnormal sex crimes."

According to the Korean Womenlink's Sexual Crime Counseling Center, revenge porn has become a ticking time bomb. Victims often don't know they were filmed until the videos spread on the internet or their former paramours threaten them to make the videos public.

POT-SMOKING FASHIONISTA BUSTED

A 29-year-old fashion designer was caught for growing marijuana inside a closet at his house and smoking it on more than 800 occasions, the Nowon Police Precinct in northern Seoul said.

The designer, named Kim, bought 80 grams of marijuana at the end of last year, extracted the seeds and began growing them. He created a makeshift garden inside his closet using aluminum foil and lights, the police said.

"Kim works as a fashion designer and sometimes composes music. And we found he repeatedly

smoked marijuana over the past three years," a police officer said.

Before he embarked on his own cultivation project at his home in Yongsan District, he allegedly smoked marijuana at his workroom in Mapo District with a friend of the same age surnamed Park.

Park was also arrested without detention for smoking marijuana, a drug that is banned in Korea. Kim is also suspected of purchasing 320 grams of the drug for 4 million won (\$3,740) in September 2011 from a 38-year-old drug seller, Lee, who was

arrested alongside the two smokers.

Kim decided to take up his new hobby because the cost of buying marijuana over and over again was becoming exorbitant, according to the police. He also wanted to avoid getting caught by growing the product inside his house. The police said he evidently got tips on improving his green thumb by turning to the internet, especially English-language websites, to grow his crops. In Korea, online guidelines detailing the growing of cannabis are rare, but English materials are easy to find.

KOREA'S OFF-TRACK BETTING CREATES UNEXPECTED PROBLEMS

For most office workers and students, Sunday evening is a time of dread, with a weekend of freedom coming to a close and a new workweek just hours away. But at an off-track betting center in Seoul's Yongsan District, the setting sun on Sunday is a time of hope: A chance to make up for one's losses, or at least lick the wounds of a failed weekend of bets.

The 7:30 p.m. race beamed in from Seoul Race Park in Gwacheon, Gyeonggi Province, is the final show.

Anxious punters fix their gazes on the screens showing the horses leaving the starting gates.

They get more aggressive as the race progresses, and anyone who blocks the view of the screens is likely to be addressed with an obscenity. The men are mostly in their 40s and 50s. When the race ends, many tear their betting slips to shreds and drop them on the floor. A whiff of smoke from a nearby smoking room fills the air. The men plod out of the center.

The betting center abutting Yongsan Station is also seeing its own sun set. This month, it was scheduled to move 83 meters away to a new 18-story building.

But that small move has created a very large furor as local residents say it will bring the punters and their nasty habits closer to local schools and their students. In fact, in its new location, the betting center will be closer to six schools than it was before.

Residents formed an emergency response committee and staged a candlelight protest.

"The presence of the betting center will be a blight on an environment in which children attend schools," the committee said.

If you spend time at the current center, you can see what the residents don't want near their schools and kids. It's in a building with a dissipated 1980s aura. At capacity, the center can squeeze in some 2,700 people. But there are not enough seats and men stand or squat by walls or pillars.

The move to the new site is legally sound. The School Health Act requires businesses of such a nature to remain outside a 200-meter perimeter of schools — a school safety zone — and the new building complies.

But opponents argue that 200 meters is not far enough. The strongest complaints are coming from the Sungshim Girls High School, the alma mater of President Park Geun-hye, where the local residents' committee held a press conference last month. "Off-track betting centers promote the undesirable idea of earning big prize money through gambling," said a representative of the committee. Opponents also argue that the move will prompt a host of adult entertainment businesses to move into the area.

In Korea, the stereotypes about horse race punters are pretty negative, and they're basically seen as persona non grata, especially around children. Stats show that the stereotypes aren't without some basis in fact. According to a 2009 study released by Korea University, out of 23 types of gambling activities, horse racing is the third-most addictive with a 19.9 percent addiction rate. (Casinos and other adult games come in first with 33.4 percent, and cycling is second with 20.4 percent. Internet gambling comes after horse racing with 19.5 percent.)

The Korea Racing Authority, the state-run regulator that runs the center, is the chief defender of the move. Spokesman Park Jong-bae disputes the charge that sex crimes increase around betting centers.

"This is a groundless claim that slanders the KRA's customers," he says. As to complaints from local schools, he points out that the Yongsan center only opens on Fridays and weekends, and during the rest of the week it will function as a community cultural center that hosts low-priced guitar, singing and English lessons. "The new betting is on a site that does not overlap with routes that students of nearby schools take," he says.

The new building is as clean and modern as the old one is dingy. The ground floor will have a café run by disabled personnel trained to be baristas by the KRA.

The entire project has cost the KRA 120 billion won (\$106.8 million), and Park says entry charges to punters will be raised from 1,000 won to between 10,000 won to 30,000 won.

The limit to the number of gamblers who can come in will be kept unchanged at 2,718.

RIOT POLICE HANG UP THEIR SHIELDS

A riot police unit exclusively tasked with countering protest rallies during tumultuous times in the 1980s and early 1990s has disappeared into history. The last group of riot policemen, distinguished by their shields, padding and Darth Vader-style masks, was discharged from military service.

Formed in 1971, initially to counter North Korean infiltration attempts, the police unit was present at some of Korea's historic moments of the period, most notably the suppression of the 1980 Gwangju Democratization Movement.

The shrinking pool of draft-eligible males was the main reason the unit was disbanded entirely. The calmer form of recent protests also made riot police less necessary than during the days when protests against strongman administrations here flourished.

In response to the new circumstances, the National Assembly voted to stop conscripting young men for the riot police as an alternative to military service beginning in January 2012.

In the future, draftees who opt for a 21-month stint with the Korea National Police Agency instead of regular military service will be assigned to the remaining tasks the disbanded unit once handled. In 1970, the rubber-stamp National Assembly of the time approved the formation of the riot police unit; the first members joined it the next year. Originally planned as an elite force to combat North Korean infiltrations, such as the 1968 raid on the Blue House by a team of 31 North Korean commandos, its mission gradually changed to breaking up (or at least containing) demonstrations by democracy activists and other dissatisfied domestic protesters.

As the frequency and scale of such demonstrations increased, the number of troops assigned to the unit rose significantly, both in absolute numbers and as a percentage of the total police force. In 1982, there were just under 40,000 combat police, about 40 percent of all police.

By 1987, their numbers had risen to 46 percent of the total force and more than 54,000 members. During the 1990s, their role dwindled, and by the late 1990s, they were used primarily as visible deterrents outside government bodies such as the National Assembly, the Blue House, airports, the U.S. Embassy and American military bases. These police also supplemented regular neighborhood patrols when needed, police officials said.

ITAEWON BURNS

A fire broke out early on the morning of Sept. 30 in Itaewon, central Seoul, engulfing eight buildings and generating 250 million won (\$232,250) in losses.

Yongsan Fire Station said that it was not immediately clear what caused the blaze, which damaged 15 shops and restaurants and produced thick clouds of black smoke.

"It seems no one was in the buildings when the fire broke out," said a representative of Yongsan Fire Station. "The cause of the fire remains under investigation, and we are investigating based on accounts of witnesses."

The fire erupted at a three-story building around 7:30 a.m. and spread to seven adjacent buildings. The fire site was approximately 70 meters west of

Itaewon Station's Exit 1, behind the main Itaewon street. Traffic on the main street was blocked off between Hamilton Hotel and Noksapyeong Station for four hours after the fire department dispatched 44 fire trucks and more than 140 firemen.

It took 70 minutes to get the fire under control. The fire station explained that the fire produced thick smoke and was hard to control because some of the shops sold clothes and had a lot of Styrofoam materials.



INSIGHT

Edited by Matthew Lamers (mattlamers@groovekorea.com)



THE BUSINESS OF BUYING A BRIDE

INSIDE THE SOMETIMES SHADY WORLD OF
INTERNATIONAL MARRIAGE BROKERING

Story by **Anita McKay** / Illustrations by **James Kim** and **Craig Stuart**

Felix Im contributed to this article. – Ed.

Kang Soo-mal-ri admitted that when she first arrived in Korea from Cambodia in 2007, she was scared. After a brief introduction by a family member three months earlier, she made the decision to accept the marriage proposal put forward by Cho Won-jeun, a custodian from Seoul, and to begin a new life with him in Bucheon, a city west of the capital.

Cho, 44 at the time, was approached by his cousin, who asked if he would like to meet with his Cambodian wife's niece. Going on nothing but a photograph of Kang that he describes as "beautiful," he made the journey to the southern province of Prey Veng, an agricultural region bordered by Vietnam, to meet his future wife and her family.

"I probably didn't look that promising of a candidate," Cho recalled. "I have two sons from a previous marriage, I'm divorced and I have my mother. I was very honest and forward and just said, 'I want to find someone to be happy with. Is that okay with you?'"

Kang, 37 and seven years Cho's junior, said she found the situation daunting and only had a "vague image" of what life in Korea would be like. "I was pretty scared to be honest. I didn't know anything about Korea, except from what I saw in their dramas in Cambodia. I didn't even know where Korea was."

With this idealized view of a new life and a suitor who admitted that he "wasn't the best catch," she discussed his proposal with her family and agreed to the marriage. After her aunt's approval, Cho bowed in gratitude, left her with money to prepare for her journey and returned to Korea.

In the three months that followed, Cho began making arrangements for his wife's arrival, buying everything from bras to maxi pads to give her a comfortable start. He was also left with the complicated task of making the marriage official. In order to help with the considerable paperwork

required for international marriages, Cho sought assistance from an international marriage broker. Traditionally these brokers, also referred to as international marriage agencies, facilitate men in finding a spouse before dealing with the documentation to legalize it. Although Cho only required support with the certification of the marriage, he ended up paying 20 million won (\$18,000) – equivalent to what other agencies charge for their full service.

"The agencies take care of everything in terms of documents, but they just keep asking for money and you have to give it to them, or the marriage won't be official," said Cho. He explained that he was under the impression that the "massive fee" the agency requested up front included the money he would give to his wife's family, a traditional gift in many Southeast Asian countries. However, when it came to passing the gift on to the family, he was told that he would have to deal with it himself.

The financial tug-of-war came to a head when Cho joined forces with others who had similar experiences to have the agency shut down for tax evasion. In Cho's view, financial manipulation is "standard procedure" with the agencies. "It was just another dirty agency I had to go through. Luckily, I managed to meet the person I wanted to be with, without an agency."

'It's just like shopping. First the Korean agency gathers their clients, Korean men. Then they call the madam in the foreign country who acts just like an international marriage broker but couldn't appeal to the market because most countries prohibit international brokers. The madam gathers the women who want to marry foreign men.' — Kim Jae-ryon, chief of committee at the Korean Bar Association of Multicultural Family Support



HOW THE INDUSTRY WORKS

The international marriage broker industry has a short but controversial history in Korea. Government recognition stretches back only two decades while regulations overseeing the legality of the practice were introduced less than 10 years ago. This isn't surprising when looking at how fast the rate of international marriages has grown over the past 13 years. In 2000, marriage between a Korean national and a foreign spouse accounted for 3.5 percent of all marriages in the country. In five years, the figure increased almost fourfold to 13.5 percent, and currently stands at 8.7 percent.

The industry itself has garnered a host of media attention. Stories of inadequate information being provided to potential spouses, women suffering domestic abuse at the hands of their new Korean husbands, a lack of sufficient regulation and support for migrant women in Korea and men being deceived by their new spouse after they receive their visa are all well-documented cases. Despite these accounts raising red flags against international marriage brokers, their popularity remains substantial.

There are currently more than 1,000 brokers registered in Korea. As the popularity of international marriage agencies has increased, the government has worked with them to address various issues. Efforts by NGOs in raising awareness of the dangers associated with these brokers have not gone unnoticed. But with all of this controversial media attention, why do people still use international marriage brokers?

International marriage started out as a female phenomenon with Korean women marrying foreign husbands following the Korean War. In the late '70s, the Unification Church — a religious movement promoting unity, founded

in Korea after the Second World War — encouraged international marriage in a bid to help foster harmony between Korea and Japan. In the church's early years, the movement's then-leader Sun Myung Moon matched more than 2,000 Korean nationals with Japanese spouses in a single marriage ceremony. Such mass marriage ceremonies still occur today.

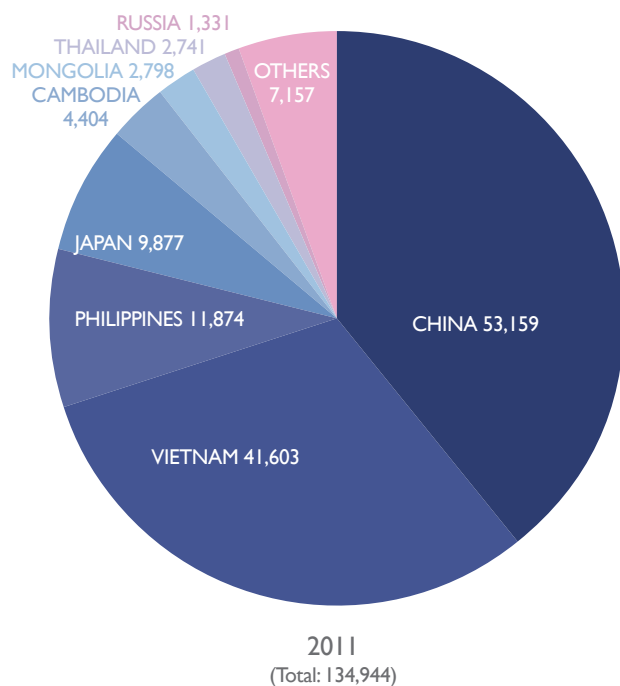
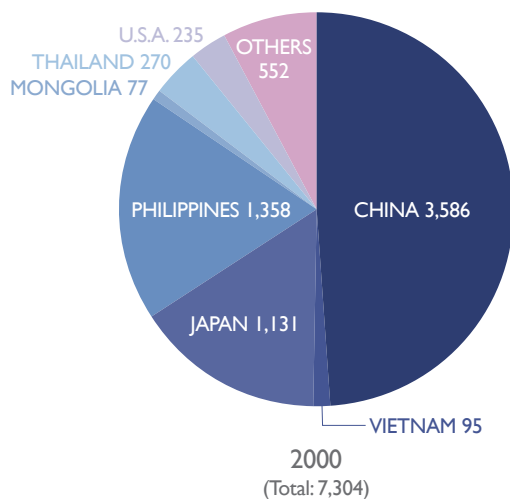
The phenomenon became male-dominated when China and Korea established international relations in 1992. With farm bachelors in rural parts of the Korean countryside unable to find wives, local government offices began matching them with ethnic Korean women in China referred to as Joseonjok. These local offices, unable to link the couples together, established a middleman to act as a matchmaker. With the realization that profits could be made from linking Korean men with a foreign bride, an industry of international marriage brokers began to surface. Along with this, the range of available wives expanded to other Southeast Asian countries. In 2000, out of the 7,304 international marriages that took place between Korean men and a foreign spouse, the largest number of brides by nationality came from China (3,586) and the Philippines (1,358). In 2009, Chinese brides still made up the majority (34 percent) followed by women from Vietnam (22 percent).

As the industry grows, the demographic of men who seek their services has changed. In the beginning, men who solicited international marriage brokers lived in rural areas where there was a shortage of women, who tended to gravitate toward cities for work. Local governments promoted the use of marriage brokers as a way of repopulating the area. More recently, as Korea's male birthrate outpaces the female, the scope of men seeking migrant wives has widened to the general male population.

KOREA'S MIGRANT WIVES, BY NATIONALITY

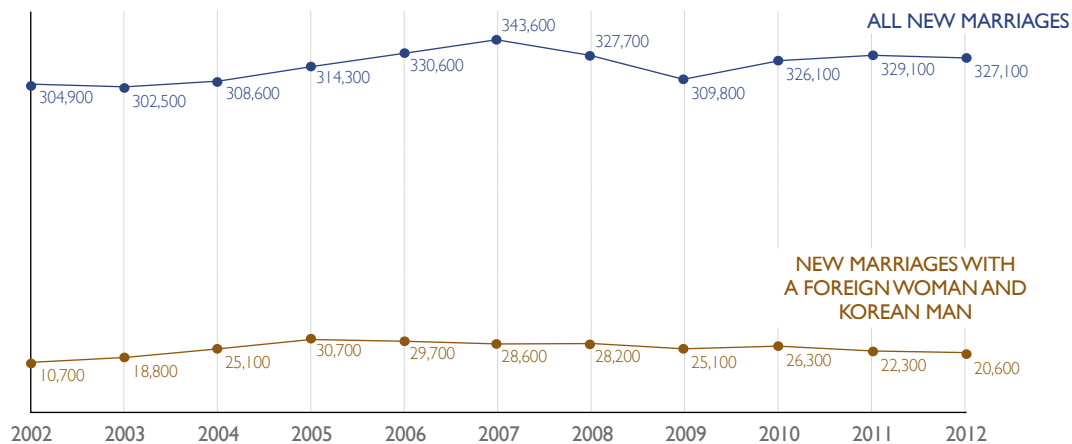
(Number of foreign women married to Korean men)

Source: Statistics Korea, Ministry of Public Administration and Security



MARRIAGES WITH FOREIGN WIVES

Source: Statistics Korea



GROWING PROBLEMS

With no regulations governing this rapidly growing industry, problems began to arise.

"From the first time I visited my husband's house, I regretted my decision," recalled Ms. K, who did not want to be named. Ms. K, who came to Korea through an international marriage agency, said she decided to seek a husband to live in a more "comfortable environment." Her experience with the agency, which was recommended by a friend, resembles many stories that have been told before.

"I could not communicate with the agency directly. I just communicated with (the) broker in my country. I wanted to know more about (the) Korean man, but (the broker) didn't know about that," she explained. After a swift meeting with a Korean man, she agreed to the marriage and her new husband returned home after three days. When she arrived in Korea seven months later, she told herself instantly that she had made a mistake. "In my husband's house, I could not find the restroom and dining room and he didn't give me money to me. I had to endure hunger."

In a bid to become self-sufficient, she tried to find a job, but without any Korean language skills, she was turned down by employers. After two years, she filed for divorce.

Cases of domestic abuse and inaccurate information given to both spouses about each other are the most widely documented issues stemming from the marriage broker industry. The welfare of the foreign wives has recently received a lot of media attention and led to some positive changes. But the process of buying a bride — the cause of these issues — is what needs to be addressed, according to Kim Jae-ryon, former chief of committee at the Korean Bar Association of Multicultural Family Support.

"It's just like shopping," she said in describing the business of buying a bride. "First, the Korean agency gathers their clients, Korean men. Then, they call the madam in the foreign country who acts just like an international marriage broker but couldn't appeal to the market because most countries prohibit international brokers. The madam gath-

ers the women who want to marry foreign men."

When the marriage agency in Korea has a husband-to-be lined up, they contact the madam in the foreign country who then provides the agency with photographs of possible wives. After meeting the selected candidates in their home country, the Korean man makes his decision and, if there is no rejection on the woman's part, they proceed with the marriage process before he returns home. However, Kim stated that sometimes the women are not given an option once the man has made his decision.

"I heard (that in) most of the cases, the women had no right to choose or reject the Korean men. Only the right to choose (was given to the) Korean men," Kim said.

According to Kim, there are two types of men who seek a wife through a marriage agency: men who have been wed before or left widowed with children to care for, and men who are unable to find a Korean wife because of their low socioeconomic status. The first group, Kim suggested, is looking for more of a "polite nanny" who can be easily controlled. The second group, she continued, views international marriage agencies as an easy way to get married; some even take a bride who is much younger than they are.

While by law, international marriage brokers are obliged to provide information to spouses such as criminal history, health status, job history and income, this, Kim believes, is not the most important thing to know. She stipulated that first these women must be aware of the "bad cases" that seem to disappear from the agencies' memory. Secondly, she stressed, is understanding the standard of living. For example, a Cambodian woman may view her new husband's salary as luxurious, but doesn't necessarily understand that 1 million won cannot afford the same lifestyle in Korea as it would in her home country.

For many women who use these agencies, the idea that Korea leads to a better life evolved in part from the popularity of Korean dramas. With typical dramas portraying

'From the first time I visited my husband's house, I regretted my decision.' — Ms. K, a migrant wife

Korean men as kind and loyal, Kim contended that the Korean Wave in other Southeast Asian countries has led to a false understanding of what life in Korea is really like. "East Asian women like to watch Korean dramas. They think and they dream that if they go to Korea, most of the Korean men will be so kind, like the actors in the drama," she said.

The reality, however, is usually far different.

A life in Korea can present the opportunity to escape economic hardship for some non-Korean women. But this opportunity is not without its problems. Kim stated that cases of family violence — including sexual abuse — are a common occurrence in Korea, but women are still afraid to come forward and seek help from a higher authority out of fear of being sent back to their home country. "If their reason to choose international marriage is caused by their economic goal," Kim explained, "we couldn't blame them because they also have to live with the foreign man (in) a real marriage life." She maintained, however, that most women cannot afford to send enough money home because they end up having to support their new husband, too. She did recognize that there are some women who just want to earn money and will run away from their Korean husband. Cases like these, she said, must be punished by law.

While financial reasons may lead women to accept the risks involved when using a marriage agency, they must also be willing to live with their new spouse. Should any form of violence occur, help can be sought from the police, migration office or NGOs, some of which specifically help migrant women. A new law introduced in 2005 improved the rights of foreign brides in the case of divorce. If it is proven that the bride is not at fault, a divorce can be granted and the foreign bride is permitted to stay in the country.

DIVORCE AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Divorce rates among international marriages have seen a huge jump over the past decade. According to Statistics Korea, divorce from a foreign spouse made up 1.3 percent of total divorces in 2001. In 2005, this figure grew to 3.3 percent and continued to rise to 9.3 percent in 2009 before seeing a slight fall. The latest figures show it's on the rise again with a slight increase to 9.5 percent.

Studies suggest that the rate is linked to the rising prevalence of domestic violence in those households.

According to a 2010 Domestic Violence Actual Conditions Survey by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, almost 70 percent of migrant wives experienced domestic violence. This is over 10 percent higher than the domestic violence rate in the general population.

In Korea, domestic violence is viewed as a private matter that should not be spoken about outside of the family. Kang Seong-euy, former secretary-general and counseling center manager at the Women Migrants Human Rights Center of Korea, believes that this is an issue which needs to change. "In Korean and Asian culture, they do not want to discuss family problems outside of the family. But to solve the problems, we need to think logically," she said.

The center, which works to inform and protect the rights

of migrant women in Korea, encourages women who have been subjected to domestic abuse to contact the police so there is an official record, emphasizing that it could be used as a source of evidence should the woman go to court.

"If a woman calls the center for help, at first we try and figure out what the situation is. If there is violence, we ask them what they want to do," said Kang. If the foreign wife wants to speak with her husband and work it out, the center will contact the husband and explain the situation. If, instead, the wife says she wants a divorce, they ask if she has discussed this option with her spouse before assisting her further.

Many of the problems foreign brides face in Korea stem from the culture difference. Kang explained that foreign women can find it difficult to adapt to their new life and conduct what some would deem as wifely duties — like getting up earlier than their husband to cook breakfast. The "family-to-family"-oriented view that Korean men expect may not translate well to women who are not familiar with Korean culture. "International marriage is very different. When a woman from Vietnam comes to Korea, only one woman goes into the family. So the family expects that she accepts the culture because she is coming to Korea."

Kang reiterates what many people have said before about the industry: The main problem is a lack of honest information provided to both men and women by the marriage agency. For her, this is the catalyst that other problems stem from.

In 2007, a Vietnamese wife died from domestic abuse in Cheonan, South Chungcheong Province, and another killed herself the following year in Gyeongsan, North Gyeongsang Province. It wasn't until the disturbing murder of 20-year-old Thach Thi Hoang Ngoc that the government took notice. Ngoc, from Vietnam, was murdered by her 47-year-old husband eight days after she arrived on the peninsula in July 2010. The husband's schizophrenic disease, which had been treated more than 50 times in the previous five years, was not disclosed to Ngoc when she accepted his proposal. This threw the international marriage broker industry into the spotlight and brought government regulations into question.

Following this incident, the MOJ announced a plan for "mandatory cultural education for Korean men." These classes aimed to educate men on the ethics of marriage. A press release from the MOJ stated that although marriage is a "personal issue," the "Korean government will take measures to prevent a marriage that is undesirable or inappropriate according to social custom and tradition in Korea."

Han Kuk-yom, a representative of the Women Migrants Human Rights Center of Korea, doesn't regard these classes as a "sincere effort" by the government and dismisses them as a media-friendly strategy to make the government look like it is doing something. "The Korean government is aware that a lot of human rights issues are arising from the Korean man's awareness and value system. And because they use many brokers when they get married, they treat these women as products, not as human beings."

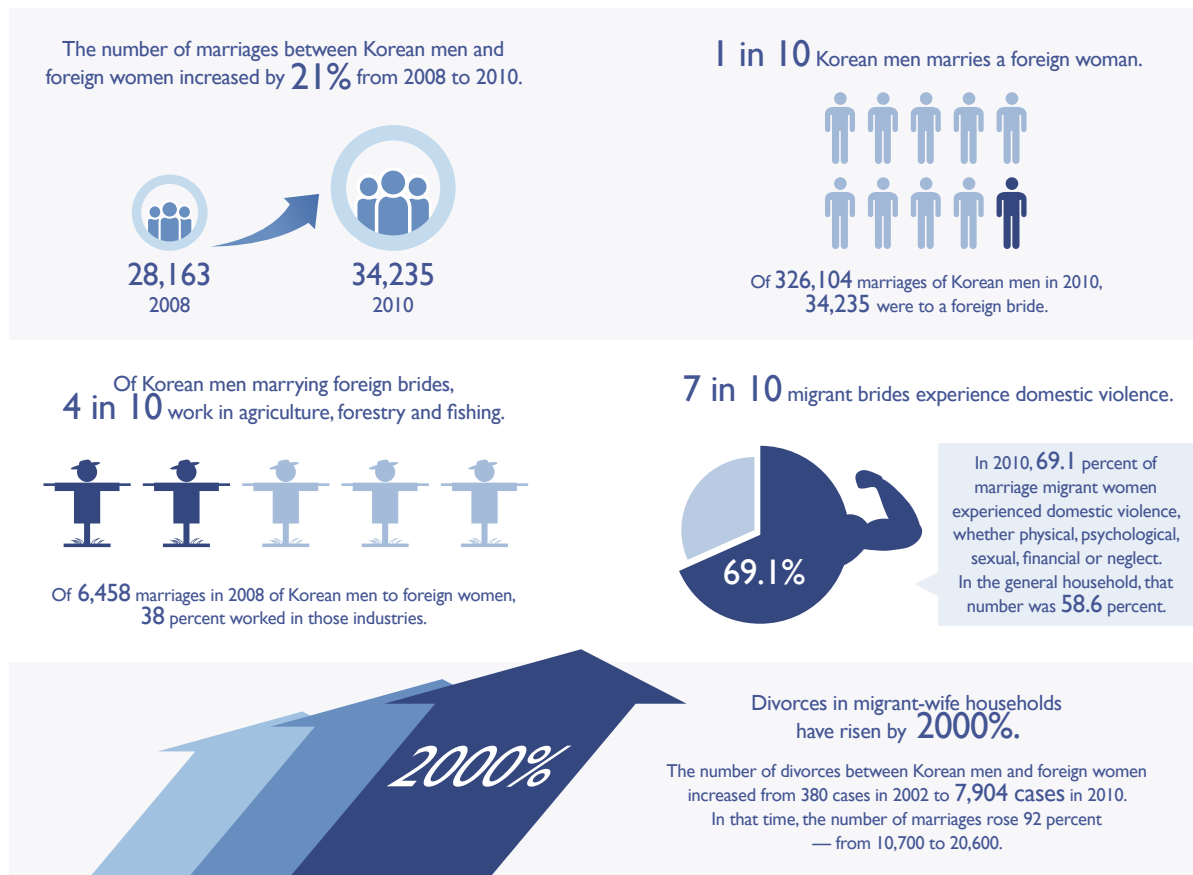
She maintained that the government's effort to educate Korean men has failed. Initially, she said, a three-day class

'There are so many places for women to go to but not for men.
Nobody thinks they are victims, too.' — Ahn Jae-sung, head of the
International Marriage Victims Center



MIGRANT WIVES: MARRIAGE, DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND DIVORCE

Source: Ministry of Gender Equality and Family



was proposed with textbooks, but due to low participation and strained economic resources, the course ended up being a single mandatory four-hour session.

The half-day International Marriage Guidance Program provides information on “laws and systems and example cases of marriage-related crimes, while collecting identity information on Korean nationals and sending it to overseas missions in order to expedite the process and enhance the accuracy of visa issuance.”

The class can be taken by men who are preparing for international marriage. Those who are set to marry within a year of completing the training will expedite the visa process for their foreign wife. While encouraging people to be aware of how cultural differences can impact married life is arguably necessary, the length of the training session – given the tragic circumstances it resulted from – brings the level of education into question: What can actually be learned in a four-hour training session?

“One man who achieved success in marrying a foreign bride will come in and present how he achieved that success,” explained Han. After this, students are told about the legal process and necessary documentation, and the class wraps up with a short session on human rights awareness. “It’s not a sincere effort of educating these Korean males. On the surface level (the government) is doing all

these things. ... It’s more like advertising that they are doing something,” she said.

MALE VICTIMS AND RUNAWAY BRIDES

Lee Myo-hyun, 67, from Seoul, was recommended an international marriage broker from a fellow church goer and was further encouraged by a priest at her church. After hearing about their 23-year successful history of arranging marriages, Lee, along with her 44-year-old mentally disabled son Han In-oh, decided to start the process of finding him a foreign bride. “It was August of 2011, but then they told us for some bureaucratic reason that once October 2011 passed we couldn’t get married, so we had to hurry the process up,” she said.

Lee took out loans and used her savings to gather the discounted agency fee of almost 27 million won. Han, who was presented with a wife from the Philippines, went to visit his new bride in September 2011 and returned to Korea, without her, after the wedding ceremony. Once he returned, the agency requested that he go back to the Philippines in November where his new wife kept asking for more money. When Lee asked the agency why Han’s wife wouldn’t return to Korea with him, she was told that her son

"had gotten violent and angry" during a previous visit — a claim he denies.

Lee said she had no reason to be suspicious, as she was reassured by a trusted friend that everything was okay. "Our priest encouraged us to stick with the agency and continue with the process, saying, 'Money is just money, but a person and meeting someone is for life,'" said Lee. An acquaintance — who initially introduced Lee to the marriage agency — went to the Philippines with the aim of bringing back Han's wife at a cost of just over 2 million won (\$1,800). When she returned without his bride, Lee was refused her money back.

It wasn't until July 2012 when his wife from the Philippines arrived in Korea. Fifty-five days later she ran away without a trace. It was only at this point that Lee became skeptical. When she contacted the agency for help they were told that Han's wife had returned to the Philippines but refused to give the date of her departure. With her trust for the agency diminished, she contacted immigration to get the answers she needed. The immigration office informed her that Han's wife had not left Korea.

"When I think about it now, even while my son was in the Philippines they continued to ask us for money, saying that they needed living expenses. I even ended up paying for a laptop computer because they said that they needed it for something very important. One time when we asked why she wouldn't come to Korea, she gave us the reason, 'Oh, I can't live in Korea with you because I have this boyfriend in the Philippines,'" Lee said.

After realizing that the agency would not take any responsibility, Lee went to the district office, the federal court and different local government offices for help, but said they didn't take her seriously. The only place she was able to find help from was the International Marriage Victims Center, a small NGO which offers free legal advice and documentation. Ahn Jae-sung, head of the organization, said

he receives about seven calls a day from people who have had a similar experience to that of Lee and Han, with some of the same agency names coming up again and again.

Ahn explained that in many cases the wife would arrive in Korea and run away almost the next day. Because there were so many cases like this, the law started to ask the agencies to take some responsibility. Currently, according to Ahn, a certain amount of

time is required after the foreign bride arrives in Korea — 55 days — to make everything official. After that period, if the wife runs away, it's possible to make it seem like a legitimate divorce and the agency is no longer accountable.

This is the most common problem his center is contacted about. Describing the entire process as "deceptive" from all involved, he said that the decision to wed is made far too quickly before a bond between two strangers can be made.

"People run into the process without thinking. Many peo-

ple get married almost instantly after meeting. From the man's side and the woman's side, it's just not a very honest process. The law has a responsibility to go after these agencies and make them legally responsible for the damage they inflict, financially and emotionally," he said.

Ahn's center is one of the only places of recourse available to men who feel they have become a victim of international marriage brokers. He maintained that traditional routes to justice like the police, the prosecutor's office, and the national courts are usually reluctant to help the usual victims of international marriage scams, who he describes as "poor and uneducated." And when help is offered, it often costs "even more money with minimal results," he said.

"There are so many places for women to go to but not for men. Nobody thinks they are victims, too."

Spousal abuse is an issue that the International Marriage Victims Center is very familiar with, but the center's role does not focus on protecting the wives.

Ahn acknowledged that one of its members was imprisoned for beating his foreign wife with an iron pipe. When Groove Korea inquired about the accusation, he pointed to the wife's alleged infidelity and disrespect, adding, "I'm being frank here when I say that if I were him (the wife beater), I don't know if I could have controlled myself. She was totally out of line."

Further, he admitted that his group frequently attends meetings of the Women Migrants Human Rights Center of Korea and interrupts them by shouting and throwing things. "We make our voice heard as often as possible," he said. "Every once in a while, someone will throw a can or something to get their attention, but it's never been violent, and we've never hurt anyone."

REGULATION AND MARKETING

In many Southeast Asian countries, international marriage brokers are banned. In Korea, however, they are legal. While laws exist to regulate the industry here, the same cannot be said for the "exporting" countries. Some brokers in Korea use an acquaintance in the foreign country to gather the women. While participation is voluntary, money is exchanged and businesses profit. Because of this, the industry has drawn parallels to human trafficking.

"Vietnamese — They Don't Away! — International Marriage Specialist." This is a phrase used on a Korean roadside advertisement by a marriage broker, as reported in the 2007 U.S. Department of State Trafficking in Persons Report. The report highlighted how marriage brokers market women from less-developed Southeast Asian countries as commodities. Other banners seen along the countryside with similar phrases were picked up by the mainstream media, leading to a crackdown on marriage brokers advertising their services, as reported in The Korea Times. The newspaper reported that the Ministry of Government Administration and Home Affairs joined with the National Police Agency in an effort to remove such discriminate advertisements from July 27 of the same year.

However, this failed to curtail the lack of marketing stan-

'We need to toughen measures taken by local governments to control the illegal activities of marriage agencies.' — Kim Dong-cheol, deputy director of the Multicultural Family Support Division at the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family



dards used by marriage brokers. Four years later, the same newspaper reported that a 45-year-old man filed a petition in July 2010 with the National Human Rights Commission in response to 30 advertisements for marriage brokers. The banners, which were all found in the Anseong area of Gyeonggi Province, discriminated against foreign women on the grounds of gender and race, with one banner reportedly reading: "Blow-out sale for 9.8 million won for men wanting to marry Vietnamese women on the commemoration of Korea's advancement into the second round of the World Cup."



The NHRC condemned the advertisements, saying they contained "money-for-marriage" expressions and implied that foreign brides could be bought and sold as merchandise. Following the controversy, the banners were taken down.

Although international marriage brokers have been operating since the '90s, it took almost two decades for any government regulation to be introduced. The Marriage Brokerage Business Management Act was implemented in 2007 "to contribute to building a healthy marriage culture by guiding and fostering the marriage brokerage business on a wholesome basis as well as by protecting clients." It states that any person intending to register the international

marriage broker business under Article 4 of the Act should hold at least 100 million won in capital (referring to the assessed value of assets, if the person is not a corporation), receive an education stipulated by the Ministry of Gender, Equality and Family in order to prevent damage to clients, and have no criminal record. Each business must register with its local city, county or district, which reserve the right to inspect the business.

The Act also requires each brokerage to provide the potential spouse with personal information on marital history, health conditions, occupation, and relevant criminal records and statutes from the country of the other party's citizenship. Penalties are in place to deal with any violation of the Act, including negligence to report changes in the business or providing a spouse with insufficient information.

Prior to the 2007 law, marriage brokers did not have to register with the local government. In a bid to improve the circumstances surrounding the regulation of the industry and the welfare of the people involved, the government introduced new requirements and standards that must be met before a marriage visa can be obtained.

According to The Korea Times, the Ministry of Justice earlier this year announced plans to "strengthen the screening criteria to issue marriage visas." The new measures aimed to better position the government to deal preventively with problems such as domestic violence and social alienation. If the new plans are approved, foreign spouses would be required to take a Korean proficiency test and meet the basic level of the language to obtain a visa. If the couple can prove that they can successfully communicate in a different language, a marriage visa would be granted without the need for a Korean proficiency test.

The Korean husband would be subject to a stricter financial standing evaluation in order to prove that he is capable of supporting his new wife. And, to dismiss any notion that marrying a foreign spouse through an international marriage agency is an easy option, the new rules would not permit marriage between a Korean partner and a foreign spouse if the Korean partner has been divorced from another foreign spouse within the last five years.

Despite these new proposed plans, the government still views marriage as a "private matter," which limits how much they can get involved, according to Kim Dong-cheol, deputy director of the Multicultural Family Support Division at the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family. "From a governmental stance, it's best to interfere with marriage as little as possible, as they are mostly private affairs. However, it is impossible to completely avoid interference," he said.

While Kim's position on international marriage agencies lies firmly in the belief that they are a business out to make a profit with little regard for consequence, he maintained that the ethical issues they cause make any legal procedures problematic due to the red tape involved. "Since the issues surrounding international marriage agencies are mostly moral ones, it's difficult to approach them from a legal perspective without restricting essential freedoms of free enterprise."

Kim stated that the government is working toward holding agencies responsible for marriages that fail due to the

exchange of false information. This involves working to enforce the violation of laws in relation to the operating of a business, including shutting an agency down and removing it from the registry of licensed practitioners. However, he admits that making someone accountable isn't an easy task because so many of them hold "such a small operation" it makes placing the blame even more difficult.

Along with these initiatives, the government has begun a campaign targeting men in an effort to raise awareness about male victims. He hopes these new measures will prevent people from using illegitimate agencies and help regulate the industry.

"Marriage agencies focus only on the fees accumulated from the services without paying any attention to the consequences of the marriages themselves, resulting in many foreign women in the marriages becoming victims. As a governmental organization, we're obliged to help these victims," he said. However, he added, correcting these agencies' wrongdoings shifts the burden onto the taxpayer. "We need to toughen measures taken by local governments to control the illegal activities of marriage agencies."

While the steps taken by the government have been welcomed by some others have criticized its involvement, saying it has led "to the domination of illegal brokers." Han Yu-jin, president of the Korean Foreigner Matching Association, maintained that some government regulations have put a strain on the industry rather than building a "healthy foundation" based on the needs of the market.

The KFMA, which aims to foster a culture of healthy marriages for multicultural families, cited some of the key issues with government

involvement as:

- An excessive demand for documents to be submitted;
- Establishment of marriage brokerage law with illogical or excessive components;
- Government regulations and ordinances that work against market flexibility, economic reality, and access for individuals of all income levels

These regulations, among others, have "distorted" the marriage broker industry, according to Han. "While direct governmental regulatory activity has distorted the market system and contributed to the domination of illegal brokers, it has also brought about the development of higher business standards and operations. The problems, which are caused by the government, should be fixed in an institutional way," he said.

It's clear that the government has acknowledged the issues surrounding and arising from the use of international marriage brokers, but whether or not government regulations are equipped to deal with them has caused some debate. Jasmine Lee, a proportional representative of the

ruling Saenuri Party in the National Assembly and a Filipino-born naturalized Korean, was quoted earlier this year in The Korea Times as saying that the nation will be able to see "positive effects" from the new regulations.

However, not everyone agrees that government intervention always leads to the change in policy that is really needed.

Han, from the Women Migrants Human Rights Center of Korea, is among the prominent voices who have been advocating for better regulation of the industry. She said that although the government has introduced new requirements for setting up a brokerage, regulating the industry is still problematic.

She explained that there are two types of brokers: registered companies and illegal individual brokers. The illegal brokers are usually owned by a couple — a Korean husband and a foreign wife. Using the network that the foreign wife has in her home country, the broker is able to match Korean men with a new spouse. These illegal companies, according to Han, make up about 30 percent of the industry. The problem with these brokers, she stressed, is that they are not registered and therefore cannot be regulated properly. This, coupled with a lack of consideration for human rights, has resulted in some agencies offering a "bride guarantee" as a way to solve the issue of "runaway brides" — with some agencies even requiring the foreign bride to sign a contract stating that she will not suddenly leave, Han said.

"There are some brokerage agencies which promise that these foreign brides will not run away. They say that they are going to be responsible, but the way they are being responsible is by offering another woman to the Korean man (which) requires more money. It's not like getting the runaway bride to come back. It's recruiting other foreign brides and bringing them to Korea instead," she explained.

While Han recognized that some Korean men become victims to runaway brides, there is also an issue with Korean men not following through with their matrimonial promises. After marrying their bride in her home country and returning to Korea, Han said that some Korean men can have a "change of mind," and the invitation for the foreign bride to come to Korea never arrives. For Han, this is especially worrying as it is common for the new husband and wife to consummate their marriage on the wedding night before the husband returns to Korea. "Korean males promise to their brides in China and other countries that they are going to invite (them) to Korea. But when they come back to Korea they don't invite the women and they can't come to Korea without a visa," she said.

EXTERNAL PRESSURE

International marriage brokers are illegal in some Southeast Asian countries, such as Vietnam and the Philippines.

On Sept. 1, 2009, Philippine Ambassador to Korea Luis T. Cruz issued a warning to Filipinos asking them to refrain from using illegal matchmaking agencies in entering into marriage with a Korean national. The warning came after

'That's what the government is interested in — integrating all the foreigners and the foreign brides and their children into Korean society. Not necessarily making the environment and society value their human rights.'

— Han Kuk-yom, representative of the Women Migrants Human Rights Center of Korea

the embassy in Seoul reported it had received many complaints from Filipino wives of abuse by their Korean husbands.

Following this, the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family issued a memorandum of understanding with the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (an organization directly collaborating with the president of the Philippines) in March 2012. This was the second such MOU to be established (after one with Vietnam in 2010) and was aimed to create a prior education program in the Philippines for Filipino women and improve the rights and interests of marriage immigrants through protective programs and training. The early adaptation programs, which are more commonly known as "wife classes," are promoted in Vietnam and Mongolia as well as the Philippines.

The program is a basic crash course on Korean culture for women who intend to emigrate to the peninsula for marriage. For Han, these classes serve a purpose, but there are still drawbacks to the impact that they have. In order to participate in one of these classes, the foreign bride must already be married to her Korean husband.

"It's better if we have that center, but it's still restricted because those foreign brides already decided to come to Korea as a foreign bride, so the education effects are limited to a certain population," she said.

ARE MARRIAGE BROKERS THE BIGGEST PROBLEM?

Han estimated that about 80 percent of all the problems foreign brides face stem from international marriage brokers, with the biggest issue being their priority placed more on profit than on the well-being of their clients. While she recognizes that some government changes to policies and laws are a positive step, she feels change isn't being implemented in the right areas. "There are many policies ... but it's focusing more on social integration. That's what the government is interested in – integrating all the foreigners and the foreign brides and their children into Korean society, not necessarily making the environment and society value their human rights."

From Han's experience, many of the government initiatives that were established to protect the human rights of foreign brides in Korea — such as a 2005 divorce law and the establishment of a call center support service — are made because of human rights groups and other NGOs lobbying the government, not necessarily through the government's own initiative.

Korea's traditional patriarchal family system, coupled with its declining birthrate, has caused policy to focus on the multicultural aspect resulting from marriage through an international brokerage, according to Han. She believes that this is a "huge issue" for the government because of the impact it could have on Korean lineage.

Korea's acceptance of the marriage broker industry is well documented throughout the media — both national and international. However, it takes a tragic example to publicly expose the deeply rooted problems embedded in the indus-

try's main motive: to make money. The idea that a lifetime of happiness can be bought, and in some cases guaranteed, is a concept that preys on the naivety, desperation and hopes of vulnerable people — regardless of nationality.

Next year will see the government implementing new regulations which Han, from the Women Migrants Human Rights Center of Korea, says will help to control marriage broker businesses in Korea. She stressed that while there is still a long way to go before the industry reaches sufficient human rights standards, laws are being introduced in the right areas.

"The laws that will be established next year — the strengthening of the visa issue — will regulate a lot of broker companies, but at the same time there are remaining questions about protecting the human rights of foreign brides," she said.

It's a difficult task to take an honest look at the industry when honesty is the one thing it is said to lack. While agencies claim that they have successfully matched many couples, it's not an easy promise to buy into. Kim, chief of committee at the Korean Bar Association of Multicultural Family Support, paints a grim picture of the success rate that some agencies advertise: "Most of the cases will fail," she said.

However, she believes that government regulation does have the ability to change the industry for the better — but new laws can only be successful if all of the countries involved cooperate together. In order to achieve this, she says, Korea as the accepting country has a responsibility to set the standard of good practice.

"I think the key role depends on Korea because our country is the accepting country. In reality the (sending) governments allowed many women to go to Korea through marriage because it is no harm to that government. They just reduce the human victims (in their own country). In that case, I think it's better to make it legal and the government has to control it with the agencies," she said.

"We have to become a role model in international marriage."

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MORE INFO

Women Migrants Human Rights Center of Korea
(한국이주여성인권센터)

Phone: (02) 3672-8988

Address: Seoul, Jongno-gu, Sungin-dong 178-68, 4th floor

Website: wmigrant.org (Korean only)

Migrant women's hotline: 1577-1366 (English, Chinese, Vietnamese, Thai, Mongolian and Russian consultants available)

Women's emergency hotline: 1366 (Korean only)

International Marriage Victims Center

(국제결혼 피해센터)

Phone: (010) 3713-7744

Website: cafe.daum.net/mna5319

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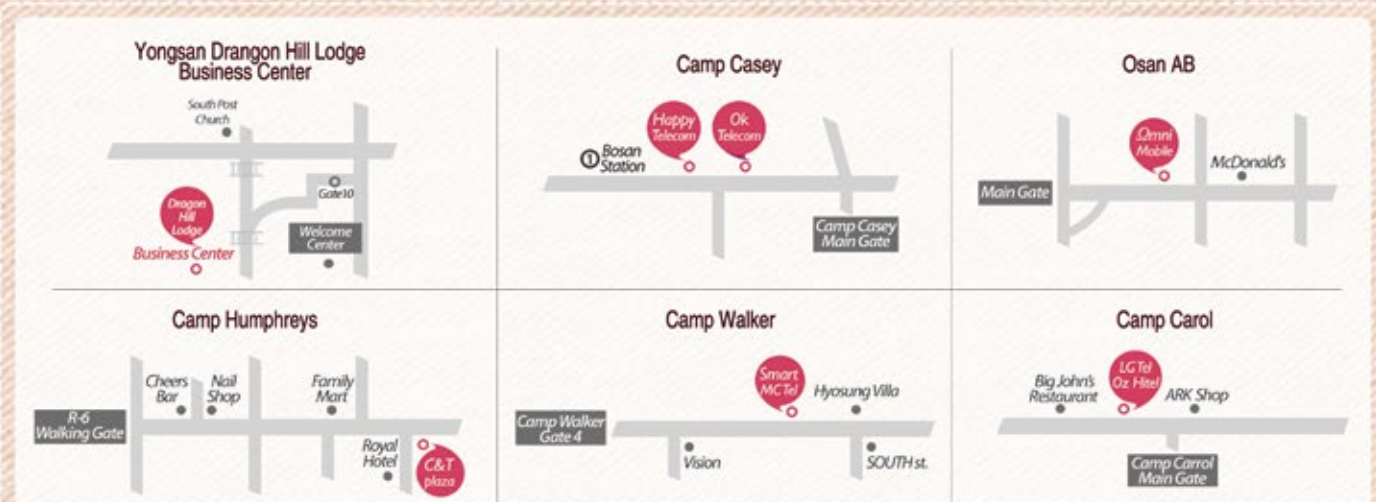
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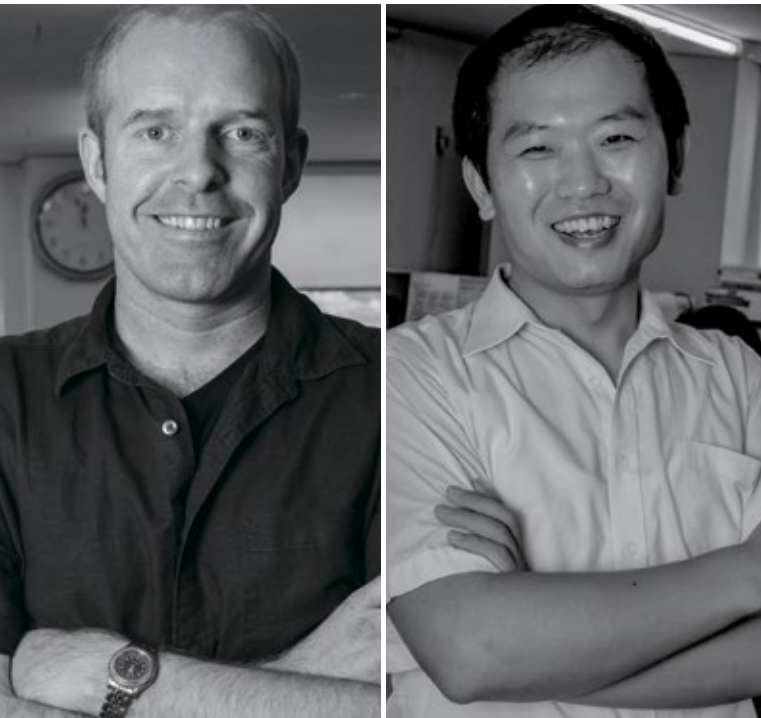


DISPATCHING THE SECRETS OF NORTH KOREA

Daily NK digs up the dangerous
truths of the communist state

Story and Photos by **Sabrina Hill**

Illustrations by **Gregory Pence**



When it comes to getting the latest information on a country like North Korea, there are few reliable sources, and even fewer in English. But in spite of the obvious challenges, there is a group committed to digging up intelligence on the Hermit State.

Run from a nondescript office in central Seoul, an accomplished team of reporters scours the internet, calls on confidential sources and deciphers official government statements to bring news on North Korea to the world. They call themselves Daily NK.

Maintaining partnerships with media outlets all over the world, Daily NK owes its success to its in-depth content. Its team of reporters and editors draws on a web of local and international connections for insight that has made Daily NK the de facto source for North Korea-related news in the region. Daily NK's goal is to be a channel for "the free flow of information, while also providing the general public access to fair reporting and educational resources about North Korea." Established in 2004, the organization abides by a set of guiding principles that include "defending the human rights of the North Korean people, and supporting



the democratization of North Korea.” In an interview with a Japanese reporter, Kim Jong-il’s eldest son, Jong-nam, acknowledged Daily NK as having “by far the most accurate on-the-ground data on market conditions.”

They call on sources within the two Koreas’ respective governments and in the private sector. This includes reporters in North Korea who relay information back to Daily NK through a secret network and defectors employed by the publisher.

“Based on the interviews I conducted with defectors in Seoul, it was clear that I should travel to the Sino-NK border to recruit North Korean nationals to work as reporters,” said Daily NK’s president Park In-ho. Relying on skills he honed as an activist, he assumed the identity of a student and was introduced to a number of North Koreans by Christian missionaries, aid workers and others. His extensive knowledge of North Korea was an asset, helping him to connect with wary strangers suffering in the severe famine, he said.

“Not all my meetings proved productive; for instance, North Koreans would take payments and then just disappear. However, I also discovered very talented people from the North who would later become contributors to the Daily NK after passing a number of trust-building tests,” he said.

“I told them their job, first and foremost, is to survive. Reporting information is important, but a secondary priority.”

Daily NK hasn’t escaped North Korea’s notice. “They criticize us in particular,” said Christopher Green, the group’s manager of international affairs.

‘Lee Myung-bak made the mistake of trying to manage the North Korean crisis like a business when normative rules do not apply. It’s in this vacuum of critical information and resolve that the Daily NK sought to make a difference.’

— Park In-ho, Daily NK president

'I discovered very talented people from the North who would later become contributors to the Daily NK after passing a number of trust-building tests. I told them their job, first and foremost, is to survive. Reporting information is important, but a secondary priority.' — Park In-ho, Daily NK president

"Certain NGOs ... were told at the dawn of 2013 that if they gave interviews to Daily NK," said Green, "they might lose access to their North Korea programs." While the South Korean government largely ignores the group's work, he added, the North is upset enough to threaten intellectuals and aid organizations that speak to them.

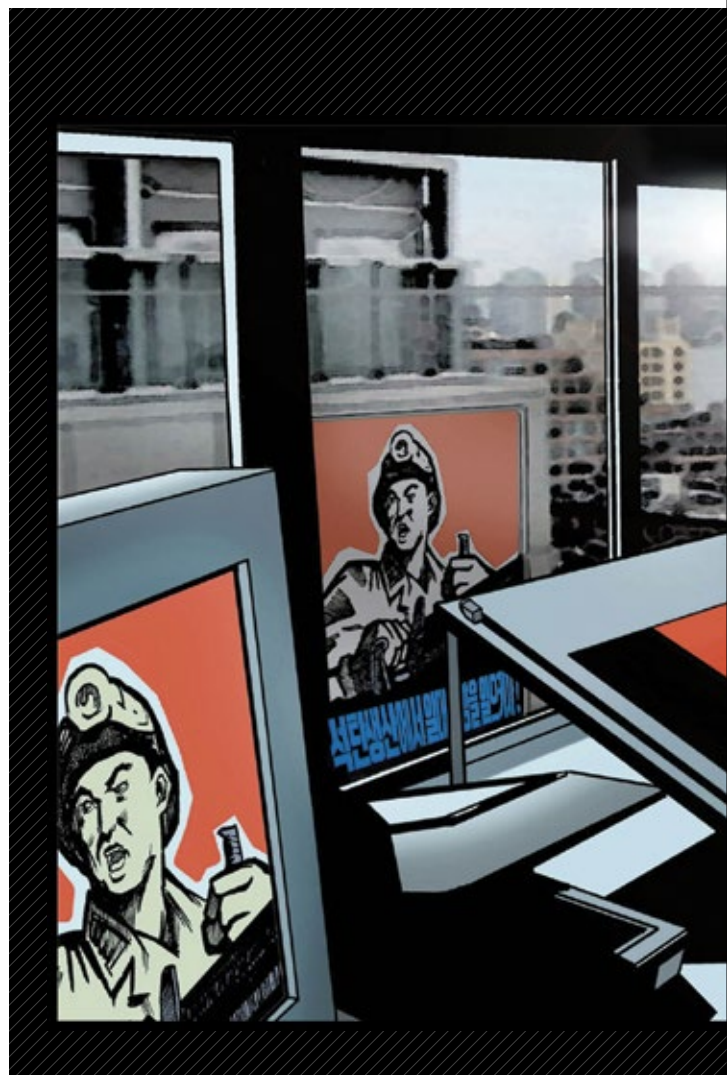
The need for a news outlet such as Daily NK became clear after the historic inter-Korean summit between South Korean President Kim Dae-jung and North Korean leader Kim Jong-il in 2000. After much deliberation, the Kims reached an agreement: Seoul would send oil and money to North Korea, and Pyongyang would work in partnership to end tensions. With the South longing to mend ties with its sibling, its media cooperated.

"Many South Koreans suddenly had renewed hope for reunification. Thus, a type of self-censorship occurred that prohibited reporting North Korean (misconduct) for fear this moment of long-awaited harmony would end," said Park, who at the time was part of the Network for North Korean Democracy and Human Rights, known as NKnet. "Needless to say, our team, which was responsible for monitoring the human rights situation inside North Korea and building relationships with defectors in China, felt bitter disappointment."

Only later in 2003, he said, did news surface that the North received a \$500 million payout for the summit. "The general public now felt betrayed, both by the media for failing to do its job and by politicians for failing to do theirs," Park said. "Deep-seated apathy among a new generation of Koreans became even more entrenched during the Lee Myung-bak administration. Lee made the mistake of trying to manage the North Korean crisis like a business when normative rules do not apply. It's in this vacuum of critical information and resolve that the Daily NK sought to make a difference."

Getting reliable, unfiltered news on North Korea is difficult. Seoul is known to regularly filter or block messages from the North, limiting its people's knowledge of the communist state and editing or restricting live broadcasts in the name of national security. That information void is where Daily NK steps in.

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MORE INFO

Visit Daily NK at dailynk.com/english.

Contact Daily NK to make donations or to get information on how to volunteer.

See the next page for Daily NK's new monthly column for Groove Korea.

The writer is the managing director of the Centre for Strategy and Peace in Korea. Visit the Centre's Facebook page at facebook.com/StrategyForPeace.



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WE WERE NEVER ON THE VERGE OF WAR

North Korea plays the international media like a boy with a fiddle

Column by **Christopher Green** / Illustration by **James Kim**



Is the North Korean leadership aware of how its bellicose, demonstrably unreasonable and over-the-top approach to diplomacy is viewed from abroad? Don't they recognize, for example, that their recent temporary closure of the Gaeseong industrial complex — formerly a symbol of reconciliation on the border between the two Koreas, but now little more than a hostage to fortune — will only do them harm? What about the decision to advise Pyongyang-based diplomats to consider leaving the Korean Peninsula, and then warning foreigners in Seoul that they rest in the line of fire? Surely

North Korea's leaders must not appreciate that these actions are damaging to themselves above all; for if they were cognizant of the fact, would they not change?

The answer is that not only are they aware of this reality, but they are also comfortable with it. The North Korean ruling clique knows perfectly well how the world perceives it. The country is not a belligerent outlier throwing verbal grenades from behind a gigantic firewall of ignorance; rather, it has been exploiting a position of overwhelming knowledge dominance for years.

ABOUT THIS COLUMN

Christopher Green is the manager of international affairs for Daily NK, an online periodical reporting on North Korean affairs from Seoul. The opinions expressed here are the author's and do not necessarily represent those of Groove Korea. For more information, visit dailynk.com.

TO SUCCUMB TO THIS PUBLIC RELATIONS RUSE WOULD
CERTAINLY BE UNWISE. NORTH KOREA IS NOT GOING TO START
A WAR WITH ANYBODY. THE REASON WHY WE SHOULD BE
CONFIDENT ABOUT THIS IS SIMPLE: NORTH KOREA IS NOT ONE
MAN, AND KIM JONG-UN, WHILE ONE MAN, IS NOT NORTH
KOREA. HE IS A DECISION MAKER, BUT NOT THE ONLY ONE.

From its founding years, all through the disastrous famine of the 1990s and up to the present day, information about the wider world has been entering the corridors of power in Pyongyang. Ignorance has never been bliss, and the top elite has not been short of data. This is logical, for if key government officials had not been given access to knowledge of the world then they could not have done their work. Image making has always mattered as much in Pyongyang as it does in Seoul, London and Washington, and an absence of information about the opposition would have made such endeavors impossible.

In times of yore — long before you, the North Koreans or I had the internet — loyal elements in Pyongyang's state-run media used to gather information from far and wide and distribute it in the form of the so-called Reference Newspaper. Exclusively for officials high within the ruling Korean Workers' Party, the publication was divided into three sections: South Korean news, world news, and science and technology. Delivered once or sometimes twice a day, it was read by the privileged few in their workplaces and then returned from whence it came. It could not be taken home, and there was no accessible archive.

The only difference now is that the process of harvesting data has gotten easier. Today, journalists from global news agencies do much of the legwork. When photos of South Korea appear on the pages of Rodong Sinmun, the main North Korean daily publication that ordinary people are actually allowed to read, blind men did not pluck them out in a darkened room. Rather, loyal staffers scour international websites for usable content. This material is then spun into a narrative for the domestic and

international audience, one that supports those points the authorities want to reinforce — for example, the existence of opposition forces protesting against South Korea's conservative North Korea policy (a real but rather rare occurrence).

As a result of this dominance over information flows, the North Korean side is able to govern the impression of its leaders and policies that the rest of humanity receives. It is a situation rather reminiscent of the 1970s, when the U.S. government deliberately conveyed a willingness on the part of President Richard Nixon to sanction actions that any "ordinary man" would have considered insane in order to force a conclusion to the Vietnam War. In keeping with the basic principles of the "Madman Doctrine," former North Korean strongman Kim Jong-il, a man allegedly fascinated by the U.S., was portrayed for his 17 years in power as a stack-heeled shoe-wearing, womanizing madman. Later, of course, he was turned into all those things but with one additional feature: a finger on the big red button.

Now, with the arrival of new leader Kim Jong-un there is another media representation to contend with — one that, though more mundane, is no less effective. When asked what we know of the new Kim, one common answer is that he is a young and inexperienced ruler. It is an image that asks every one of us a question: "Do you want a 29-year-old man of both youth and inexperience to lead a nation in possession of nuclear weapons?"

Earlier this year, Kim hosted faded NBA superstar Dennis Rodman in Pyongyang. What message was the international community supposed to take away from this event? Certainly, nobody left with the

impression that Kim Jong-un is a sensible man of action, someone whom, in the words of the late Margaret Thatcher, "we can do business with." Rather, he was portrayed as an oaf, a young and inexperienced imbecile who, by completely ignoring former New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson when he had visited Pyongyang just weeks earlier, implied that he prioritizes an infantile obsession with basketball over the serious business of politics.

What the North Korean leaders want us to believe, of course, is that there's nothing we can actually do about this state of affairs. Only if we pay them enough, they say, then they can at least make the nervy young tiger sit down for a while and relax.

To succumb to this public relations ruse would certainly be unwise. North Korea is not going to start a war with anybody. The reason why we should be confident about this is simple: North Korea is not one man, and Kim Jong-un, while one man, is not North Korea. He is a decision maker, but not the only one. Rather, he is the titular head of a bureaucratic entity with a long institutional memory, one that uses the knowledge it gleans from the world outside to govern what the world outside is allowed to know about it.

On April 15 this year, North Korea lavishly celebrated the 101st birthday of avuncular national founder Kim Il-sung, who died in 1994. That day's fireworks inspired worried declarations that a dangerously youthful and inexperienced man who cannot be trusted is now in charge of North Korea, and that the international community must act fast to avoid disaster.

But that is simply not the case.

9 SMART WAYS TO LEARN KOREAN

With a smartphone and the internet, these nine tips
can enhance your Korean learning

Column by **Hyunwoo Sun** / Illustration by **James Kim**



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Hyunwoo Sun works for Talk To Me In Korean, a website and community that offers free Korean-language lessons. In a little more than three years, it has built a following that numbers in the hundreds of thousands. Learning Korean may not be easy, but if you find a way to make it fun and exciting, you'll get more out of it and learn faster. Talk To Me In Korean submits this regular column on studying Korean. — Ed.

In today's world, we are constantly surrounded by "smart" devices, and most of us can't imagine what it would be like to spend a day without them. Nowadays, most smartphones facilitate hundreds of mundane tasks. Even with the slightly more luxurious apps — something as functional as unlocking your car or ambitious as flying a camera-equipped toy helicopter — nothing surprises us. So while we can now do all these cool things with our smart gadgets, is there any way they can make language learning more fun and effective?

The answer is a definitive yes. Even without the latest model that can shoot 4,000 videos or recognize your fingerprints, by just working with the basic smartphone functions and internet connectivity, you can try these nine ways to digitally enhance your Korean learning.

1. Your phone is your best dictionary

Remember when you had to carry a thick dictionary to language classes so that you could look up words? Well, over the past couple of years, paper dictionaries have almost completely disappeared from students' backpacks and been replaced by electronic versions. It is easy, however, to forget that you can also use your phone as a dictionary. Check out websites like wordreference.com or endic.naver.com for some good Korean-English/English-Korean dictionaries that are optimized for smartphone screens.

2. Use your online resources

If you opted out of learning Korean a decade ago and blamed it on a lack of convenient classes or a lack of good books, you might have had a point. But these days, you can find basically everything you need to study Korean — websites, blogs, podcasts, YouTube channels and mobile apps — online. One major benefit of using online resources is that you can interact with the content providers, which makes your learning more active and fun. We at TalkToMeInKorean.com, for example, have published hundreds of free Korean lessons over the years. So, if you think you're ready to start learning more, don't let anything hold you back.

3. Visualize your vocabulary

There is no easy way to remember new words. Your smartphone, however, can help you. When you learn a new Korean word or if you're still confused even after consulting a dictionary, enter the word into an image search. The images will help you understand the difference between 강독대 and 부채, for example. Though it's sometimes easier with nouns, you'll either get an exact visual representation, or at least a better understanding of the contexts in which that word is used.

4. Are you sure that's how you sound?

One big mistake many Korean learners make is that they don't work on their pronunciation enough. Only by knowing how you actually sound in Korean can you fix any mistakes and sound much more natural, which will also improve your listening skills. By using a smartphone's standard recording app, you can either check your pronunciation yourself or put those Kakao skills to use and send it to a friend for review.

5. Keep a record of everything — everything — you learn

Now that almost all smartphones come equipped with cameras, you can easily take photos of handwritten notes or screen capture the pages you were looking at from an online resource. If you find a word that looks interesting, write it down in a note on your smartphone and go back to it later. Learned an interesting phrase from a friend or on television today? Ask a friend to say it for you and make an audio or video recording of it. And don't forget to stay organized with apps like Evernote or Google Docs; it's a lot easier than it seems.

6. Find a language exchange partner

So you've been studying really hard on your own and you'd like to practice speaking with a native speaker, but you either don't have a study buddy or can't afford to pay someone. What should you do? With your smartphone, you can find language exchange partners who are willing to help you practice speaking Korean. Hello Talk is a good example of a mobile app that can put you in touch with those who want to practice speaking in another language, and there are many others available as well.

7. Ask Google

It's always exciting to learn a new word, grammar point or expression, but when it comes to actually using what you've learned, it can be really scary at first. Why? Because you're always afraid that you might say it wrong. To say things as correctly as possible, look for apps that include human correction and guidance. One option is our writing correction service, HaruKorean. Alternatively, you can simply add quotation marks before and after the phrase you are looking for and plug it into Google; if it garners a million search results, you can be quite certain that it is used by native speakers.

8. You are never too busy to study

How much Korean should you be able to study to call it good progress? At the end of the day, anything is better than nothing. Even if you're a busy person, you can always find those periods of downtime, whether you're waiting for your coffee, waiting for the subway or just lying in bed when you can't sleep. If you use these moments to look up one word or practice using one simple phrase, they can accumulate over time and help make you much more fluent than you were just months ago.

9. Share your progress

We all invest a lot of energy in social media and keeping up with our friends. When you're learning Korean, the best way to stay motivated to continue learning is sharing things on social media. By updating others on your progress, you not only get the chance to help motivate other people, but you also give people the chance to motivate you as well.

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NEED MORE ALLOWANCE?

Getting loans and credit as an expat is tough, but doable

Column by **Paul Sharkie** / Illustration by **James Kim**

So far, this column has delved into the seemingly unfamiliar worlds of Korean investment and internet banking, as well as the fees and procedures associated with overseas remittance. While each of these are legitimate areas of concern, they all relate to products and services that everyone who is legally living in Korea is entitled to, given that they have the appropriate forms of identification. Simply having ID, however, is not always a guaranteed ticket to every

banking product and service. This brings us to an issue that those of us in the financial services industry are often asked about: eligibility for credit cards and loans.

There are a lot of misconceptions about these banking products, especially with regards to one's perceived entitlement to each. In other words, there are a lot of misunderstandings to clear up. So what exactly are you, as a non-Korean, eligible to apply for?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Paul Sharkie is the Foreign Client Relationship Manager for Shinhan Bank's Foreign Customer Department. Please visit Shinhan Expat Banking on Facebook for more information. The banking information provided in this column is based on Shinhan Bank policies and may not be applicable to all banks in Korea. — Ed.

1. Jeonse (전세) loans

Finding housing independently from your employer can be a costly process. And with rental prices at an all-time high and still climbing, many Koreans adhere to the "jeonse" system. By handing over a large sum of money to your landlord when you first move in, you can pay a much lower monthly rent or even avoid paying it altogether. This lump sum deposit is called key money, or jeonse. Although paying no rent sounds like a dream, not everyone has vast sums of money lying around. So they turn to us — the banks — to apply for a loan.

To be eligible for a jeonse loan from Shinhan Bank, for example, an individual must get a Certificate of Guarantee from an authorized issuer. Unfortunately, due to the internal policies at many of these organizations, a Certificate of Guarantee for a jeonse loan will often only be issued to Korean nationals. Check with your bank teller about the likelihood of being considered; there are a variety of factors that play into being approved, such as your bank, the products it offers and, of course, your individual customer status.

2. Mortgage loans

Subject to a successful credit rating (from an independent credit bureau in Korea)*, you may be eligible for a mortgage loan to purchase an already-built house. The eligibility criteria are the same as those that Korean nationals must meet and are mostly based on your credit rating.

3. Car loans

As with jeonse loans, foreigners are not usually eligible to receive car loans. This is because you need a Certificate of Guarantee from a relevant issuing organization, and, unfortunately, they do not issue these to anyone other than Korean nationals. It is for this reason that foreigners hoping to purchase a vehicle might want to consider applying for a "personal credit loan," or perhaps request an increase on their credit card limit.

4. Personal credit loans

While difficult, it is not impossible for a foreigner to get a credit loan in Korea. If the borrower has an excellent credit rating, for example, then the bank in question may grant special approval of a loan. A more common process, however, is for the borrower to seek a Korean guarantor (co-signer) who also has a good credit rating.

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* With regards to your credit rating, the following are assessed by an independent credit bureau: income, occupation, tax payment history in Korea, credit card spending, timeliness of bill payments, bank customer status, other debt and overall financial history in Korea.

Credit cards

Applying for a credit card is relatively easy. All you need is a valid passport and an alien registration card; the other requirements are relatively straightforward, but not everyone may meet them. Your salary, position, customer status or real estate ownership (in Korea) can increase your prospects of a successful application.

If you are not successful in your application for a regular "unsecured" card (or your teller feels that you may not be), you may apply for a "secured credit card" instead. Although not a credit card in the traditional sense, these cards offer the same benefits as a regular card and allow the customer to build credit. They only differ in that they require a deposit of money. This gives the bank some "security" over your application. At first, many people are put off by this option, but you do get the deposit back (with a small amount of interest). It also adds to your credit rating, which may prove useful in the future.



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LIGHTS ACROSS THE RIVER

OBSERVATIONS FROM INSIDE THE NORTH

Story by **Jean Poulot** / Photos courtesy of **Stefan Krasowski**

Train: sleeper, made in China. Destination: Beijing. Hours to arrival: 24. Year: 2005. It will be a slow trip, but not a special one.

Except for one detail: The train is departing from Pyongyang.

The station here is Japanese, from the colonial era. It was bombed out during the war and then rebuilt, Soviet-style. Tall square pillars decorated with stars line the stern facade. The clock tower is an unsuccessful mix of Stalinist architecture and Eastern pagoda, looking more like a tacky wedding cake. Below the face, a 2-meter portrait of Kim Il-sung smiles reassuringly. It's similar to the one at the airport, placed there perhaps to remind the few travelers present that they are lucky to be traveling here.

The platform is wide, with trains going only one way: northwest, toward China.

It is free of advertisements but filled with propaganda slogans: "Glory to the Juche Idea. Long live the Dear Leader, Kim Jong-il."

It isn't a bustling station. People gather in small groups, some sitting on their heels, others standing in a circle. A few men wear drab, Mao-style uniforms while others opt for a more Western look: slacks and white shirts. The elite. They are the travelers, and the uniformed people are those who stay behind.

They all have one thing in common: They wear above their hearts a badge with a portrait of either the Great Leader or the Dear Leader, or both. As did my minders, Mr. Ri and Mr. Kang. They are on the platform waiting for the train to depart, making sure I was not going to get off the train and defect. But who in their right mind would?



Just before my train departed, Mr. Kang, the head minder, handed my passport and mobile phone back to me; both had been confiscated at the airport.

I asked if they knew that Kim Jong-nam, the eldest son of the Dear Leader, had been caught a few years before in Narita airport with a forged Dominican passport.

They looked at me with quizzical expressions. Ri turned to Kang and, after a short debate, said, "I didn't know Kim Jong-il had a son."

Once the train pulled out, Ri and Kang left, probably happy to get rid of the foreigner who asked too many questions. This was the first time they had left my presence in five days.

As the train crossed a bridge over a tributary of the Taedong River, the pyramid of the Ryugyong Hotel came into view: a 100-story national embarrassment that had stood unfinished for 18 years. A few days before, I was told not to photograph it but did anyway. From the train window, the traffic was scarce on the wide avenues, dotted with red and white accordion buses and male commuters on bicycles. Women were not allowed to ride bikes, as Kim Jong-il deemed it against socialist morals.

Pyongyang is not a sprawling city like its counterpart in the South, and we soon were on the outskirts. There, no more Soviet-era buildings and wide paved roads, only poorly maintained houses. In a rice paddy, hundreds of soldiers were replanting. This is what happens when a country spends a large percentage of its GDP on the military.

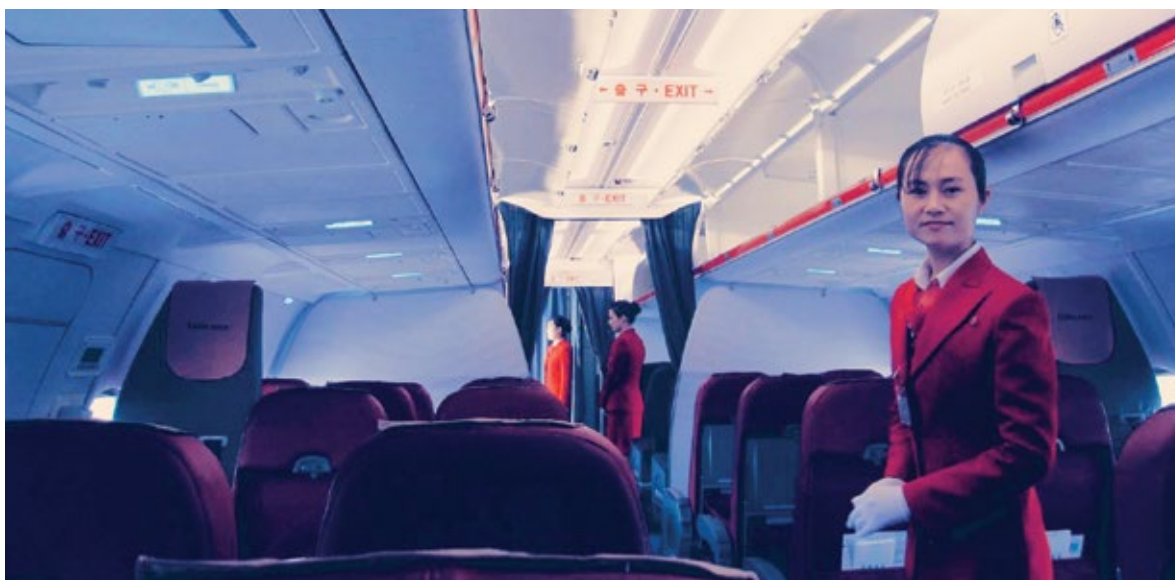
At lunchtime in the restaurant car, Mr. Kim, a Korean import/export businessman, engaged me in conversation. He was on his way to Beijing to buy hardware goods. I bought his lunch (no beef for him) and he invited me for coffee in his compartment. He was not traveling alone, but accompanied by three other businessmen. Few people are allowed to go abroad by themselves, as they could defect. In his compartment, Mr. Kim felt relaxed enough to talk about politics. In North Korea, anyone can report suspicious behavior, and a Korean talking with a foreigner is asking for trouble. When he found out I lived in Seoul, Mr. Kim was curious about South Korea. He was convinced that reunification had not happened because the South and the U.S. are against it. Like all North Koreans, he also believed that the South started the war.

I walked up and down the corridor and noticed that I was the only Caucasian on the train. There was one Chinese man sharing my compartment, most likely placed there by the travel agency so that we would not mingle with the locals.

As I was rearranging my traveling documents before arriving in Sinuiju, the Chinese businessman noticed that I had some North Korean currency in my wallet, which is illegal to export. In the five days I was in North Korea, I had never used any of it, only U.S. dollars, euros and Chinese RMB.

He told me to hide them in my money belt, which I did.

The crossing at the Chinese border took one hour, with the Korean People's Army checking for anything suspi-





cious. One soldier, very thin, asked to inspect my wallet. I was thankful for the Chinese businessman's tip. The guard, dressed in a brown uniform with an oversized cap, did not bother checking my luggage, but just looked at my passport and took the loose leaf that bore the entry stamp, removing the evidence proving I had visited the country.

Waiting for the border guards to check the rest of the travelers, I strolled around the station with Mr. Kim, who bought me a cup of weak, sweet milk coffee. I decided to take pictures of the train. My camera is not the spy-type, but a very large and very odd-looking homemade job constructed of two separate cameras that take photographs in 3-D. A civilian yelled at me as I was going to take a picture of the engine. Cars okay, engine forbidden, he said. The locomotive with peeling paint had seen better days, but it was far from being a modern rocket. I

realized then that though the train's cars had been manufactured in China, the locomotive was North Korean. The civilian — and the government — didn't want the outside world seeing the deteriorating state of everything in the DPRK.

As soon as I got back to my compartment, there was a knock on the door and the thin guard came back again. I was afraid he was going to inspect my money belt. He sat down and explained that his daughter was getting married and he wanted \$20 to help with the wedding. He said he was having a hard time making ends meet; not surprising, as in North Korea the average yearly salary is less than \$2,000. I told him I would give him the money if he gave me his Kim Jong-il badge, which is illegal for foreigners to own. He refused. This was the end of the transaction and the end of my trip to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.



AS THE TRAIN CROSSED A BRIDGE OVER A TRIBUTARY OF THE TAEDONG RIVER, THE PYRAMID OF THE RYUGYONG HOTEL CAME INTO VIEW: A 100-STORY NATIONAL EMBARRASSMENT THAT HAD STOOD UNFINISHED FOR 18 YEARS.



WHEN HE FOUND OUT I LIVED IN SEOUL, MR. KIM WAS CURIOUS ABOUT SOUTH KOREA. HE WAS CONVINCED THAT REUNIFICATION HAD NOT HAPPENED BECAUSE THE SOUTH AND THE U.S. ARE AGAINST IT.

The train pulled away from the border station and a few minutes later we were crossing the Yalu River over the Sino-Korean friendship bridge. Across the bridge was China.

The city of Dandong sits across Sinuiju. The distance is a few hundred yards, but the two places are really worlds apart.

The Chinese city is modern. Neon lights. No blackouts. Giant television screens. Traffic jams.

Pulling into the station, some North Korean citizens waited on the platform without visible badges — the first tangible sign of freedom. They did not get on the train; they were there to hand mobile phones to their friends through the windows. How could they have arranged a meeting without phones or the internet?

That reminded me of my own mobile phone, wrapped in paper, stamped with red ink and sealed with transparent tape. It looked like a miniature mummy when my minder gave it back at the station with the clear instructions that it was not to be opened until after crossing the border. As I was unwrapping it, my Chinese travel companion grinned as he pulled from his back pocket a piece of folded paper. Inside was a Kim Il-sung badge.

In the corridor, I met my compartment neighbor, a North Korean diplomat. We conversed in Spanish, because his English was about as good as my Korean. He, his wife and daughter must have been part of the elite to be able to travel abroad, as the government seldom allows families to travel together for fear of defection.

Their first stop was Beijing. Normal, I thought, maybe tea with Hu Jintao. Then off to Moscow on the Trans-Siberian Railway. Made sense again, perhaps blinis and caviar with Putin. From Moscow, the family was going to board a plane to Havana. Now, if he had said they were going to Disneyland, it would have thrown me off, but smoking Montecristos while sipping mojitos with Fidel was feasible. After all, this was a tour of old communist allies. But the family's final destination was Peru.

Peru got me thinking. In Peru there was the Shining Path, a communist separatist group. But by 2005, their main endeavor had become cocaine trafficking.

A diplomat carries a diplomatic bag, which is not opened while crossing borders. Were he and his family some of the notorious mules the North Korean government employs to smuggle cocaine and counterfeit U.S. dollars?

Would they fly back to Pyongyang over the Pacific, his luggage filled with white powder — the maximum weight allowance, of course — while his wife and daughter carried his clothes and toiletry kit?

Or would they fly to New York for a meeting at the U.N. with a stopover in Miami to unload the goods?

I will never find out. My thoughts wandered back to Sinuiju, where the residents watched from across the river the display of vibrant life, full of electricity and restaurants and freedom.

What a cruel temptation.

GROOVE





IN THE JUNGLE MOUNTAINS, A BASTION OF COMMUNITY

REMEMBERING A CHRISTMAS TREKKING IN BURMA

Story by **Travis Allen** / Photos by **Travis Allen** and **Mark Fischer**



MYANMAR — Many a traveler has set off to explore lands “off the beaten track.” Although a wonderful concept in theory, finding those lands in this increasingly globalized world is difficult, and becoming increasingly so. Last Christmas, two good friends, my girlfriend and I aspired to truly find out what it means to get off the grid and experience people and culture that have not been tarnished by tourism. To do this, we explored far into the Burmese countryside.

After drinking a few too many beers for a long-distance bus trip, we boarded an overnighter from Yangon to Kalaw. I had heard that the temperature would be cooler in “Myanmar’s Himalaya,” but didn’t fully appreciate it until jokingly being asked by a German traveler if I was enjoying “the fridge.” I groggily stepped off the bus into an air temperature that would be described as frigid on the best of days. This was supposed to be Southeast Asia. Little did I realize that this would be the first of many surprises to come.

At around 4 a.m., our rickety bus finally mustered enough horsepower to make the final climb into Kalaw, and we stepped off the bus to meet a shivering man named So-So, our guide for the trek we were about to undertake. At barely 5 feet in stature and weighing 100 pounds on a generous day, I felt slightly apprehensive about his ability to navigate for us on the days to come.

After warming up with a few cups of instant coffee and a lukewarm shower, we set out around 9 a.m. I had asked So-So about the difficulty of the trek. He responded with a shrug and a “not too bad,” exhibiting the nonchalance that would come

to define him over the next few days. I loaded my bag with gear, planning to be prepared for any photographic opportunity that might arise. Unfortunately, I didn’t take weight issues into consideration, a mistake that would come back to haunt me as time went on.

Following our departure from Kalaw, the landscape changed as quickly as the temperature. As the sun rose higher in the sky, we found ourselves immersed in cascading hills blanketed with dense pine forests, almost reminiscent of hiking back in Canada. After a few hours of this terrain, the hills opened up into expansive farmland, the rice paddies laced with irrigation rivers the color of burnt terra cotta, dry and cracked from the season’s droughts. Our feet danced around mountains of cow patties as though they were land mines, until we finally arrived at the home of an elderly farmer who graciously allowed our guides to cook our lunch at his home. As we sampled locally grown produce including cabbage, mustard greens and cauliflower, the farmer sat under the shade of his favorite tree, quietly lost in his daydreams as he smoked his cigar. I couldn’t help but muse about what he might have been thinking, this man whose life was worlds apart from mine. He seemed genuinely at peace.

In the afternoon we found ourselves once again slogging through the mountains, this time almost continuously uphill. All four of us were in decent shape and no one was outwardly complaining, but after a few hours I was beginning to consider my packing strategy’s long-term ramifications for my legs. We released a collective sigh of relief as we crested the last hill and first set our eyes upon





KYUAK SHOWED US AROUND, TAKING THE TIME TO EXPLAIN THE INCREDIBLE ARRAY OF CROPS GROWN LOCALLY, INCLUDING EVERY IMAGINABLE VARIETY OF VEGETABLE, AND INTRODUCING US TO MANY OF HIS FRIENDS, MOST OF WHOM HAD SPENT THEIR LIVES IN THE VILLAGE.

the small farming village of Aung Pan. As soon as our packs were off our backs, Kyuak lone, the resident spokesman of sorts, welcomed us warmly.

Kyuak had graciously extended the hospitality of his family's home for the night before any of us had even been introduced. I was instantly struck by the vitality, enthusiasm and wisdom that clearly lay behind his 69-year-old eyes. It was awe-inspiring that this man, born and raised in a tiny village that was barely a speck on a map, spoke decent English, completely self-taught from a simple battery-operated, handheld radio. It only went to further emphasize what I have witnessed firsthand on countless occasions: Ignorance is a choice.

Kyuak showed us around, taking the time to explain the incredible array of crops grown locally, including every imaginable variety of vegetable, and introducing us to many of his friends, most of whom had spent all of their lives in the village. We were invited to the home of a man he had known for 67 years where we were treated like long-lost family members, consuming delicious nuts and dried tea while smoking Burmese cigars. I was in complete awe of the sense of community, sharing and friendliness that everyone in the village displayed, something I saw as a true testament to the beauty of humanity. That night we gorged on a sumptuous dinner while buying the local shop out of their alcohol supply, a strong 8-percent Burmese beer called Dagon. After all, what is Christmas Eve without a heap of alcohol?

Following dinner, Kyuak made us what he called a "Christmas bonfire." He invited many of the curious villagers and we drank together, watching their shy and conservative natures melt away, and quickly realizing how, despite cultural and geographical barriers, few differences truly separated us as human beings. At one point I wandered off to stare up at the vast expanse of stars in the night sky. I realized that we were the only foreigners around for miles, and appreciated the warmhearted way this village had accepted us.

We awoke the next morning to an incredible sight. Mist had shrouded the entire valley, adding a mysterious ambiance that complemented the tranquil surroundings. Other than the occasional sound of children laughing, the morning was quiet. Suddenly, the sense of calm was broken as we heard Kyuak's transistor radio crackling away with a static-filled rendition of "Silent Night." There couldn't have

been a more perfect touch to Christmas morning.

The sun began to bathe the valley in light, which lifted the mist and, thankfully, our hangovers as well. We handed out candies to the gleeful children and said our fond farewells to the incredible people of the village before setting off again. So-So initially assessed the degree of difficulty of this day as "not bad, a little uphill." Nothing we couldn't manage, apparently.

I should have already learned that So-So clearly judged hardship on a different scale than I. By lunch, our clothes were completely soaked through with sweat. The terrain had again shifted from shady pines to an arid, desert-like environment scattered with aloe and cactus, hardly the type of vegetation under which one could seek shelter from the cruel sun. Our fatigue was only worsened by the fact that a steep incline had persisted throughout the day.

By the time we arrived at the monastery, our home away from home for the second night, I was completely exhausted. The monastery itself was beautiful. Surrounded by rolling hills, it radiated spirituality. But in spite of the serenity, the novice monks at the monastery did not have inner peace on their minds. While we unwound, they played tricks on each other, play-fought and hit each other with branches. Boys will be boys, I suppose.

That night, So-So prepared a feast with dishes featuring the fiery chilies we had bartered for with some farmers earlier in the day. Full and exhausted, we crashed hard on the floor of the monastery, fading as fast as the setting sun.

We were awoken at 5 a.m. to the sound of the novice monks chanting. Although having someone wake me at 5 would normally piss me off, I must admit that in this instance it enhanced the experience. I found myself lost in the moment, just sitting back, taking it all in. I had a sense of being somewhere in the world where no one could ever find me.

After receiving a blessing from the monastery's only adult monk, I again cursed the amount of gear in my bag as I threw the pack onto my sore shoulders. When asked about day three, So-So had assured us that it would be "easy — all downhill." After a couple of hours of marching uphill on the hottest day yet, sweating again through my only shirt, tired, dirty and sore, I almost leaped with jubilation when we finally crested the mountain and stole our first glimpse of Inle Lake in the distance, our final destination.

Again, the landscape rapidly transitioned from desert-like to an enveloping humidity as we descended. And, again, I was struck by the diversity of the landscapes we had witnessed over the past three days. We laughed as we saw two bright and shiny travelers waving to us, clean and with huge packs on their backs, clearly on their first few hours out and beginning the ascent. Ah, to be so naïve of the trials to come.

As we reached the bottom of the mountain, the dense bamboo and lush forests gave way again to cultivated farmland, brimming with a brilliant myriad of sugarcane and sunflowers. I could not help but marvel at the resourcefulness of these people, utilizing everything the land could offer and leaving nothing to waste. If the impending apocalypse arrived tomorrow, something tells me our “educated” Western society would be taking lessons from these resourceful farmers.

With the end in sight, we asked So-So just how far we had come. “Fifty-seven kilometers,” he replied with a shrug in his usual offhand manner. Just another day at the office. After some confusion and a number of wrong turns, we stumbled across a boat driver who was patiently waiting to navigate travelers through the labyrinth of narrow tributaries that surrounded the lake. Encountering enough twists and turns to make our heads spin, we finally broke out into the gorgeous expanse of Inle Lake, the late-afternoon sun glistening off the water in a beautiful golden hue.

We hopped off the boat at the town of Nyuangshwe, where So-So took us for a late lunch in the nearby market, my favorite kind of place to eat like a local. After wolfing down a delicious bowl of Shan noodles and a cold Myanmar beer, I took a few minutes to reflect on what we had just done. Certainly the landscapes and sights along the way were incredible, but what really made this trek amazing were the people. The Burmese people we encountered were caring, warmhearted and generous, constantly going out of their way to make sure we felt welcome and comfortable. They did this not because they expected anything in return, but simply because they were brought up with an emphasis on family and community, a focus many of us in the West seem to have lost somewhere along the way. These people will always hold a special place in my heart, and I couldn’t have been happier to get off the beaten track to meet them.

GROOVE



BUT IN SPITE OF THE SERENITY, THE NOVICE MONKS AT THE MONASTERY DID NOT HAVE INNER PEACE ON THEIR MINDS. WHILE WE UNWOUND, THEY PLAYED TRICKS ON EACH OTHER, PLAY-FOUGHT AND HIT EACH OTHER WITH BRANCHES. BOYS WILL BE BOYS, I SUPPOSE.



EXPLORING DAEJEON, ONE OF KOREA'S CHARMING SMALLER CITIES

THE SLOWER CITY LIFE

Story by **Alexandra Druce** / Photos courtesy of **Jirka Matousek**

Many who move to Korea are terrified that, unless they find a job in Seoul, they'll be stuck in the middle of nowhere, miles from the nearest bar, burger or foreigner. What they don't know is that there are great options outside Seoul; cities where you might not see a foreigner for days, but will know exactly which bar to visit to be surrounded by them. Daejeon is a happy medium between metropolis and country village: a place where you can immerse yourself in Korean culture, but also escape every once in a while if you so desire.

Situated more or less in the middle of Korea, Daejeon is a transportation hub and is thus accessible from much of the country. It's also an easy city to get around, with its own subway system and a good network of buses. Its footprint is much different from sprawling Seoul or Busan, though, given that you can get from one side to the other in a taxi in under an hour. And with each area having its own unique charms during both daytime and nighttime, you will definitely want to explore its four corners. Daejeon's new downtown is Dunsan-dong, which lies near

its geographic center. It has a lively, modern feel, with an upmarket department store (Timeworld Galleria), a variety of places to fuel up or wind down, and several foreigner hangout spots. Small boutiques share space with larger shops on the busy streets. You'll also find a good mix of restaurants, from fried chicken to all-you-can-eat sushi, along with a couple of worthwhile Indian restaurants and a Western-style brunch café. If, come sundown, you're more into nightclubs than noraebang, there are ample places to get your fill of cocktails, K-pop and dodgy dance moves. Foreigners tend to gather at bars such as The Cantina and Lady Pocha, lured in by the promise of pool tables, dartboards and, surprise, other foreigners.

Eunhaeng-dong is known as the old downtown of Daejeon, but this area of the city is far from irrelevant. It has an artier feel than the shiny, new Dunsan-dong. In addition to fusion Japanese and Italian restaurants, you will also find Sung Sim Dang, a bakery founded in 1956 that was recently featured in the Michelin Guide Korea. Keep an eye out for their soboro (deep-fried bread filled



with red bean paste), which is incredible. Several arcades in the area invite you to while away an afternoon shooting invading aliens or, if you're feeling brave, join the throngs of teenagers clinging to the sides of "disco pang-pang" — a sort of merry-go-round-cum-disco from which a DJ ejects people.

Daejeon Jungang Market, one of the most famous traditional markets in the city, is just across the river. Make your way over for an interesting assortment of sights and smells; the market has fresh meat and seafood, clothes, plants, snacks, fruits, vegetables and teas.

If kitsch is more your thing you can head to the Hello Kitty Café, or maybe have an Agwa bomb (or five) at Watermelon Sugar, a bar where you can dance the night away in the shadow of a large wooden penis that hangs from the ceiling. The Hanbat Baseball Stadium is just down the road, and even for people who are not particularly interested in sports, it is really just an excuse to eat chicken and have a couple beers in a great atmosphere.

Gung-dong is the main student area of the city, with KAIST and Chungnam University nearby. Pop into Maeul Game Café to play your favorite board game with a group of friends. There are open-mic nights and bands playing at trendy spots such as Santa Claus and The Shisha House, where you can escape Cass for a night to have a pint of IPA and, as its name suggests, indulge in some shisha.

When you want to take a break from Daejeon's urban offerings, there is a plethora of mountains, rivers and other beauty spots to explore around the city. The name

"Daejeon" means "large field," and although it is fairly developed now, it has still retained many of its beautiful natural sights. A survey of the skyline reveals some of the area's many hike-worthy mountains, showcasing a variety of terrain and providing access to some of the region's cultural heritage.

Bomunsan, for example, has several historic sites at its peak, and you can take a cable car up if you're feeling lazy. Closer to ground level, you'll notice that the rivers and streams in Daejeon are all accompanied by cycle and walking paths, and reasonably priced bikes are available for rent at a few places around the city. Alternatively, you can find one of the designated spots where barbecuing is allowed, such as under the Expo bridge; a lazy summer evening spent here crisping up some samgyeopsal and sipping soju is heavenly.

Yuseong's natural hot springs are found in the western part of the city, and you can either splash out on a visit to one of the hotels, with their seaweed and medicinal herb baths, or dip your toes into the free outdoor foot pools to experience their renowned healing properties.

Regardless of whether you're looking for an escape into nature or just a slower-paced weekend, Daejeon has it.

GROOVE

GETTING THERE

Daejeon is accessible by KTX or by express bus from Seoul's main bus stations.

THE SORDID TALE OF SOJU

EVERYTHING YOU HAVE EVER NEEDED TO KNOW
ABOUT THE WORLD'S MOST POPULAR SPIRIT

Story by **Dave Hazzan** / Photos by **Colin Dabbs**

Soju: two syllables that conjure up a Dickensian best and worst of Korea. It is the world's best-selling liquor, and not just by a few bottles. According to the Millionaire's Club, the global drinks industry's rankings of best-selling spirits, soju giant Jinro ranked No. 1 in 2011, the last year for which statistics are available. Selling 61.38 million cases, it more than doubled the success of Smirnoff vodka, the second best-selling brand. The third-best-selling spirit is also a soju — Lotte's Chumchurum, with 23.9 million cases sold.

None of this is big news — everyone knows Koreans drink. But why soju? How much soju do Koreans drink? What differentiates one brand from another? And how does all this compute with the average non-Korean?

Different soju brands market different gimmicks, like a "bamboo charcoal agitation exchange method" (Jinro Chamisul) and "alkaline-reduced water, which uplifts the taste of delicacies" (Chumchurum). Those brands then go to war over whether these processes and ingredients mean anything, as the Wall Street Journal reported in April.

Most Koreans believe they can tell the difference between brands; or at least, they have their preferences. On Isan's Meat Street one hot holiday night, most soju drinkers Groove Korea interviewed said they knew what they were drinking and why.

Kim Eu-tum, 27, is in TV broadcasting and he drinks Chamisul Fresh. "The brands are similar," he says, "but this one is my first choice. I never drink the other ones." He drinks only soju because it is Korea's traditional drink. Sometimes he mixes it with beer, and he often downs six or seven bottles of it. "I drink it every day!" he says. "Most Koreans drink it every day!"



Park Huk-chan also drinks it every day. A 47-year-old street artist, he's been imbibing since his middle school days, and does not distinguish between brands. "I really like the taste," he says. "I drink far more soju than yangju (any Western liquor)." He never mixes it and prefers it with meat.

Kim Ga-young, a 27-year-old nurse, drinks Chumchurum and likes it because, "It's cheap and it's a fast drunk." She drinks it in beer or straight. "I drink it when I'm bored," she says. She can usually knock back two or three bottles of it and likes it with soup. And there's no arguing its easy accessibility.

But for some (Koreans and non-Koreans alike), the first glass was the last glass, and the potential duration of one's honeymoon goes up from there: The first bottle is the last, or the first binge is the last, or the first month of binges is the last. Some like it; some like it a lot. And then there's Alexandra Petrini.

The mouthy, squirmy, 26-year-old West Virginian describes her relationship to soju: "Pure unadulterated love! Soju is worth all its trouble!"

On further reflection, she adds, "The body says it is wrong on so many levels, but the bottle is too attractive and the battle is usually a quick one."

Every bottle is like she's getting a plasma transplant – that's not soju she's imbibing, that's liquid ecstasy. Don't mess with Petrini's soju.

Of the opposite opinion is 39-year-old Buffalonian Dan Leonard. Twelve years ago, when he first came to Korea, he was thrilled at the idea of such a cheap, gluten-free booze. Leonard suffers from an intolerance to gluten, which means he cannot drink beer. Soju was a wonderful, cheap alternative — until it just started to hurt too much, both the day of and the day after. "Five parts gasoline, one part Satan's urine," he says. "You get what you pay for."



A GROWING MARKET OVERSEAS

Though the vast majority of soju is still drunk either by Koreans in Korea or Koreans abroad, a small niche appears to be growing among non-Koreans.

Derek Brown is the owner of Soju Girl in Canberra, Australia. He sells Jinro and Chumchurum and he says non-Koreans only drink it in cocktails, at least in his bar. Aloe vera juice and mango juice are his most popular mixes. "Sometimes they ask to try it straight, but it doesn't happen often," he says.

Though Brown has never been to Korea, he got the idea for a soju bar from working with Koreans. He owned another soju bar in Phuket, Thailand, before he returned to Australia.

For Australians, "it's new, it's interesting," Brown says. "It's not a regular thing. It's a chance to show non-Koreans, non-Asians there are new things out there."

A single bottle of soju in Australia can cost \$20.

Hyun Wanner owns Soju Bar, a bar and Korean street food restaurant in Berlin. They only sell Jinro, but sales are good.

"In the restaurant, we sell a lot of soju bottles," Wanner says, "and soju has turned into a very popular drink among our German guests. They seem to understand that it just belongs with a Korean meal, and most of them even celebrate 'sharing' a bottle and all the small rituals like serving it to each other, etc."

People often have their first taste of soju at Soju Bar. "The main feedback seems to be always the same: tastes like water, but then hits in and makes you drunk like (with the) heavy stuff. That is something people like a lot," Wanner says.

Wanner admits, though, that he doesn't know of anywhere else that serves soju in Germany. A bottle goes for 10 euros and a cocktail can cost between 6 and 7.

The owner of Tonight Soju Bar in San Francisco, who only goes by the name "In," serves a mostly Chinese clientele, but also serves "about" 20 percent Westerners. First reactions to soju are often similar: "With the cocktails, they think 'This is good,'" In says. "With the straight soju, 'It's not good.'"

'In the restaurant, we sell a lot of soju bottles, and soju has turned into a very popular drink among our German guests. They seem to understand that it just belongs with a Korean meal, and most of them even celebrate sharing a bottle and all the small rituals like serving it to each other.'

— Hyun Wanner, owner of Soju Bar in Germany

HOW SOJU BRANDS STACK UP FOR NON-KOREANS IN KOREA

To find out what all the fuss was about, we gathered 15 foreigners, including Petrini and Leonard, into a friend's officetel, for the first and last meeting of the Barbarian Soju Appreciation Society. The goal was simple: to taste 16 different sojus from around Korea, and rate them. The categories were smell, sweetness, crispness, burn, aftertaste and overall taste. Each category was ranked 1 to 10, and later averaged. It took about two hours. Full results are overleaf.

The big winner was Jinro: Clearly its sales are deserved. Although Jinro Gold scored high for burn — generally not a positive — it scored the highest as well for overall taste, at 6.7 points.

Brazilian-Korean Sid Lee, 36, probably the most experienced soju drinker in the group, described Jinro Gold as "the only actual, real soju. All the others are watered down for the emasculated younger generations. Jinro Gold for life!"

Petrini described Jinro Gold as a "gem." "Drinking too much of it would lead me down a very dark and destructive path," she says the most potent soju in the group, the strongest smelling and one of the crispest. There were no complaints about it.

The other Jinro brands did well, too. Chamisul Fresh (Blue) was second place at 6.4 in overall taste, and Chamisul Classic (Red) was third at 6.3, which bodes well, since both are widely available. Other favorites included Jeju's Hallasan, which scored fourth at 6.2, and Yipseju (leaf soju), which was fifth at 6.1.

At the bottom end, the most reviled soju by far was Daejon's O2 Rin. In chemistry, O2 may stand for oxygen, but in the soju world, it stands for a nasty afterburn. It scored highest on sweetness at 6.5, highest on aftertaste, at 7.3, and lowest on overall taste, at 2.8.

Ontarian Cornelia Klimek, 25, with a year in Korea under her belt, said, "O2 has an aspartame taste, very sweet, bad initial taste, goes down okay, but lingers after dumped out." Lee described it as "like chemical sweetener — blech," and another Ontarian, Emily O'Grady, 24, described it simply as "nasty."

The only other one to score below 5 in overall taste was, surprisingly, Chumchurum Fresh (Blue), one of Korea's most popular brands. It scored second highest on aftertaste, at 5.8, and second worst on overall taste, at 3.5. Klimek dumped hers out, but James Wright, 27, of Alabama, thought it went down the easiest. Robert Denner, 25 of Shropshire, England, thought the aftertaste was a bit strong for a soju with so little alcohol in it (16 percent).

The other sojus fell somewhere between O2 and Jinro Gold. Different drinkers had markedly different opinions. Klimek felt the Moon soju created a deep lung burn, Good Day was alcoholic water and Yipseju was a slow pour and thicker.

Denner felt Yipseju was more refreshing than the others, that Cham Island was very good, and that Good Day had a very good taste because it wasn't very strong.

Leonard, on the other hand, was rather disrespectful of the whole process. By soju No. 8, he insisted it felt like work; by No. 9, "I'm looking forward to a blackout so I can forget what's been in my mouth." No. 13: "I feel an odd combination of being buzzed and hungover at the same time. Please make it stop." No. 15: "Tears come to my eyes as I anticipate another glass." No. 16, and the end: "I wonder how I ever drank this stuff in my early years in the ROK. Thank God it's over and I can go back to avoiding this foul spirit like the plague."





Soju is a drink for getting drunk, and lots of Koreans love to get drunk. Though they're not the biggest drinkers in the world (Moldova holds that title), they may be the fastest drinkers, and the least shy about showing off how drunk they are.

Koreans are, however, proven to be the biggest drinkers outside of Europe.

Studies have been done, reports have been written, and there are plenty of pet theories out there about why Koreans drink so much. Stress seems to be the biggest reason; the chance to let loose in a straight-laced Confucian society is another. The speed at which Koreans get drunk probably has to do with their insane working hours — there may only be a couple hours to drink between the work whistle and bedtime, so what's the point in pacing oneself?

So barring a massive sea-change in Korean work hours and Korean society, it appears that soju is here to stay. For those of us who are also in Korea to stay, it pays to get acquainted with it. Give a few a try, choose your favorite and embrace it. But remember — like Dickens' Paris and London — it's the best of times, but then you find, as we did the morning after BSAS, that soon it's the worst of times.

GROOVE

RATE THAT SOJU

Here is how the Barbarian Soju Appreciation Society ranked Korea's most popular soju brands, with 1 being least or worst, and 10 most or best.

	Soju	Smell	Sweetness	Crispness	Burn	Aftertaste	Overall taste
1	Jinro Gold	4.0	3.8	5.3	6.0	4.7	6.7
2	Chamisul Blue (Fresh)	2.1	5.1	5.7	4.0	4.9	6.4
3	Chamisul Red (Classic)	2.8	4.3	5.6	4.5	5.0	6.3
4	Hallasan	3.0	5.2	5.4	3.2	4.1	6.2
5	Yipseju (Leaf)	2.9	5.1	5.9	3.7	4.9	6.1
6	Moon	2.4	4.4	5.7	4.4	5.6	5.7
7	Good Day	2.7	5.0	4.4	3.3	3.9	5.6
8	Cham Island	2.2	5.5	5.5	5.2	4.4	5.4
9	San (Mountain)	2.2	4.7	5.0	4.8	5.1	5.3
10	Hite Blooming	2.2	5.6	4.8	3.8	4.8	5.3
11	Hite	2.4	5.0	4.8	3.8	4.6	5.1
12	Delicious Cham	2.6	5.5	4.4	4.1	4.9	5.1
13	Chumchurum Red	2.4	4.3	5.3	5.6	5.0	5.1
14	C1	3.2	4.3	5.3	5.0	5.3	5.0
15	Chumchrum Blue	1.8	5.2	3.7	4.2	5.8	3.5
16	O2 Rin	2.2	6.5	4.2	4.6	7.3	2.8



Brooklyn — The Burger Joint aims to master the American classic

A trendy burger joint makes waves in Gangnam

Story and Photos by **Shireen Tofig**

Since coming here from the States, I've been on the hunt for a good burger. I'm happy to report that I recently found what I was looking for. Nestled in the side streets of Gangnam, Brooklyn – The Burger Joint has been in business for a little less than a year, but it's already been making waves in the scene south of the river. It's a welcome relief from the sweet, Korean-style burgers typically found in Seoul.

I wouldn't describe the restaurant as a hole in the wall, but the space itself is definitely not very big. At noon on a Friday, there was a consistent 15- to 20-minute wait to get a table. The crowd was full of businessmen, youngsters and middle-aged women on lunch dates with their friends.

The interior has the vibe of an East Coast diner with brick walls, stainless steel shelves and an elongated kitchen counter that lets you check out the action behind the scenes (if you're one of those customers). The waitress was attentive and the rest of the staff were just as friendly.

The first items to arrive were our strawberry milkshake and chili cheese fries. The milkshake was thick, creamy and not too sweet, with a texture that was more reminiscent of frozen yogurt than ice cream. The fries were cut in thick slices and not too salty, smothered under a mountain of delicious melted cheese and chili.

Given the choice between a 5-ounce "smashed" or 7-ounce "hand-formed" patty, I went for the 5-ounce "Brooklyn Works." It came with American cheese, bacon, lettuce, tomato, pickles, red onions and homemade sauce. The best part was that — and I kid you not — the bacon was grilled between the cheese and the patty, meaning it stayed perfectly still while I devoured my burger.





The best part was that — and I kid you not — the bacon was grilled between the cheese and the patty, meaning it stayed perfectly still while I devoured my burger.

The other burger we ordered was called C.R.E.A.M. — Cheddar Rules Everything Around Meat. This included bacon, horseradish mayonnaise and, of course, sharp cheddar cheese. I was hesitant to try the horseradish mayonnaise at first, but it turned out to be very subtle and savory. The combination is well balanced and one of their most popular items.

Gilbert Kim, the owner of this branch, says that they use three different kinds of meat in their patties: chuck eye roll, brisket and short rib. Aside from grinding it fresh every morning, the secret is apparently in the ratio of the three meats in the mix, which I couldn't get out of him.

Since he knows that many haven't taken to the sweet Korean sauce, Kim says their goal in creating Brooklyn – The Burger Joint was to make a burger that foreigners would enjoy. The other location is in Banpo-dong, which is owned by the creator of the chain. Word has it that he journeyed through the United States in search of the right taste to bring to Korea.

The restaurant also has a selection of Western beers and a dozen other flavors of milkshake. To top it all off, the menu is moderately priced for its portion sizes. So if you're feeling nostalgic and craving a burger like back home, definitely head here.

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The return of soup

That's right — soup is back

About the author: Shelley DeWees worked as a vegan chef for a Buddhist monastery before moving to Seoul. She is a columnist for Groove Korea. Her opinions do not necessarily reflect those of the magazine. See her website, www.seoulveggiekitchen.com. — Ed.

Column and Photos by **Shelley DeWees**

November, how we love thee. You couldn't have come at a better time. Before fall, choosing clothing was a case of deciding which shirt, the black or the white, would show less sweat. Pick the white and it's a wet T-shirt contest; pick the black and it's a less visible yet wetter wet T-shirt contest. But now that you're here, November, black and plaid are back and in vogue, ready to be thrown into the mix along with steaming dark roast coffee and freshly sharpened pencils. Thanks for passing by, November.

This month, the summer blast is finally over for good, leaving us free to hail the return of soup. Hot, sexy soup. Winter's perfect mate. A leftover-lover's dream come true. A sweater-wearing, wine-drinking extravaganza, wonderful alone or with friends. Give me a good chunky stew alongside a big 'ol pint of beer any day during the cold months and watch as I settle comfortably into my chair and forget all about everything everywhere. Oh, and pass the bread, please. Thank you. Want some?

Versatile, cheap and fantastically easy to prepare, soup is your best friend when you clomp home with the wind at

your back, starving and cranky. With only one pot and a smattering of ingredients, a meal will be bubbling merrily away in 15 minutes or less, without much more effort on your part beyond a bit of chopping and some slapdash spices. So whether it's a hearty bean concoction or an elegant French onion served with bread, tortillas or all on its own, break out the wool socks and settle in. Things are lookin' up.

This particular recipe, practiced and perfected through years of bitter Montana winters, is the ultimate in warming comfort, the paragon of heat-me-up paradise that can be attributed to both the steaming broth and the swift spicy kick of the curry paste (make a pot and try to stay cold — I dare you). It's simple and lovely all by itself, but goes to a whole new level with the addition of warm, crunchy croustons fresh off the stove. Salt, pepper and a generous dash of olive oil are combined with yesterday's bread, toasted over a hot flame and tossed on top for some oh-so-delicious soup-lovin' magic. You'd better make extra. Totally reasonable.



Spicy Sweet Potato Lentil Stew with Salt n' Pepper Croutons

For the soup

Red lentils are what you need here, mostly because they cook up super fast but also because they look pretty combined with red curry paste. Red + red = better red. Brown lentils and red curry paste aren't as cute.

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, diced
- 1 giant carrot, chopped
- 3-4 tbsp hot curry paste (use mild if you prefer less spice)
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 3-5 sweet potatoes or yams, peeled and diced into mouthful-sized cubes
- 2 cups uncooked red lentils
- 8 cups water
- Salt and pepper to taste

Using your biggest pot, warm the olive oil over a medium flame. Add the onion and carrot, cook for 5 minutes or until the onions begin to brown, then stir in the curry paste, cinnamon and 1 cup of water. Throw the garlic in on top, then drop the lid down and simmer for 5 more minutes until the curry is smooth and fully incorporated.

Add the remaining 7 cups water, the lentils, and the potatoes. Then stir, cover, and crank up the heat. Once the mixture comes to a boil (keep your ears open and listen for the bubbling), bring the flame down to medium-low and simmer, uncovered, until the lentils are tender and the potatoes are soft, 20 minutes or so.

When the soup is done, take it off the heat and let it rest while you prepare the croutons. Flavors will meld. Broth will cool. Soup will excel.

For the croutons

Don't stress about the choice of bread, really. Anything will do, whether it's a gorgeous artisan loaf or a bag of Shany dinner rolls. Use what you have on hand and get down to business.

Ingredients

- 4 tbsp olive oil (about four good glugs)
- 4-6 cups bread chunks, sliced or torn into mouthful-sized pieces
- Salt and pepper to taste

In a large, wide skillet, warm the olive oil over medium heat for at least two minutes, but stop before it smokes (you'll need it very hot when you add the bread). Carefully lay the bread chunks in the oil and toss, coating each piece as evenly as you can, then sprinkle liberally with salt and pepper. Let the bread sit undisturbed for about 30 seconds, allowing it to toast. Toss again, then let it sit for another 30 seconds, repeating the process until the bread is golden brown and the liquid is gone. Dump the croutons onto a cookie sheet to cool for five minutes before serving.

Assemble your meal with a few serious ladles of soup, a handful of crispy croutons and a big bold wine. Life is good.

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ROCKY MOUNTAIN VIBE IN THE HEART OF GANGNAM

Story by **Craig White** / Photos by **Nina Sawyer**

Its breathtaking scenery was enough for Clint Eastwood to shoot his Academy Award-winning masterpiece “Unforgiven” in the surrounding area. Brad Pitt was so spellbound while filming “Legends of The Fall” that he opted to come back to try and capture it in “The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford.” Countless TV and film production crews continue to send location scouts to the region every year.

This captivating place is none other than the Canadian province of Alberta. More specifically, it’s the expanse of land west of Calgary where the area’s loping foothills build up to the nearby Rocky Mountains. Among its visual splendor, a massive glacial rock rests south-

west of the city and is loosely referred to as “O’kotok” by the local Blackfoot tribe. But to Ed McNally and the rest of the English-speaking world, it’s referred to as “Big Rock.” When the Calgary-based McNally decided to open up a craft brewery, he was sure that the Big Rock’s mystique and allure would be the solid foundation for a brand and product.

Big Rock Brewery began to make inroads into the local beer scene in 1985, but they didn’t rise to prominence until a big brewery strike in 1986 that saw the beer giants of Molson and Labatt close for the entire summer. The business-savvy Big Rock responded to this event by pushing its quality to the forefront and hasn’t looked back since.



On the strengths of their beers like the English-style Traditional, the citrusy-Grasshopper and the bitter Pale Ale, Big Rock whipped up the region into a cult-like frenzy.

Korea's Andy Lee worked with Big Rock in Canada and also became caught up in the hype — so much so that he struck a deal with Big Rock to ship that mystique and allure to his Big Rock Brewery establishment in the heart of Seoul's affluent Gangnam district. Using the same commitment that McNally showed in the brewery's coming of age, Lee has helped Big Rock brew to be sold in over 40 bars throughout Korea and is now about to celebrate the seventh anniversary of his Gangnam location. Using the Big Rock men-

talities to keep pushing forward, he consistently seeks to raise the bar, and his new interior upgrades and menu overhauls are yet another example of this. He is now bringing Big Rock's popular Scottish-style Heavy Ale to his menu, along with new recipes such as Prosciutto Ham Pasta, Herb Roasted Chicken and other concoctions that his new chef, with a talent honed from various Itaewon eateries, has come up with.

Many craft breweries have sprouted up since Lee first brought over that taste of Alberta to make a frothy footprint in Korea, which he gratefully welcomes. The craft beer concept becoming further accepted into Korean drinking culture? That's a "Big" win for everyone.



THE IMPORTANCE OF 'SERVICE FIRST' IN SELLING IMPORTED GOODS

Story by **Craig White** / Photos courtesy of **High Street Market**

Korea's masses of foreign visitors and residents over the past 20 years have sought hard-to-find goods that most retailers here wouldn't dream of carrying. As the demand began to roar, the nooks and crannies of Seoul's expat playground, Itaewon, experienced a covert renaissance.

We knew them as black markets: places where imported goods were brought in by whatever means necessary and marked up for retail, usually at ridiculous prices. One of the early start-ups was the nameless Red Door shop, named for its distinctive entrance. The fact that it was an otherwise unmarked storefront should indicate how legitimate this business was. Nevertheless, foreigners from all over the country would trek there to buy overpriced deodorant, macaroni and cheese, herbs, spices and other rare items that the owner had procured through the nearby U.S. Army PX at Yongsan Garrison. Despite the dodgy tactics to stay in business, the Red Door lasted for over 15 years before being shuttered forever in 2011. But the lesson from its business model was clear: When it came to the small-scale sale of foreign goods, there was a lucrative market that Korean store owners could control and capitalize on, if they made the effort.

Another early adopter who catered to the demand was Hannam Supermarket, an alternative to Red Door that was located near Hangangjin Station. Despite suffering from a

chorus line of complaints that called it out on price gouging and substandard service, they also preserved for awhile, but like Red Door, eventually packed it in.

However, judging from the feedback from expat proprietors in the area who depend on imports for their restaurants, the pricing and service problems are not an Itaewon-centric trend. Korean-Canadian Paul Hong of Maple Tree House knows all too well about how Korea operates on a short-term mindset when it comes to pricing and service. "Every week, I have Korean meat suppliers coming into my restaurant, trying to get me to buy their product. And they are all about price and product, with no consideration that service is what really makes the difference that can set businesses apart," says Hong.

With Maple Tree House and its three Seoul locations cranking out over 150 million won in meat each month, it's no wonder why he receives these kinds of visits. But the account managers who come to his door are obviously not close enough to the core of their businesses to know how to deliver on corporate service values, if any even existed internally to begin with. "These guys would seek my business, which would be lucrative for them on the long term. But from the outset, they want me to pay 300,000 won for the product samples they want me to try. It's a waste of time to deal with people who are clearly thinking in a box. However, if I was representing



KOREA TENDS TO DILUTE SERVICE STANDARDS OVER SMALL FINANCIAL GAINS, WHEN DEALING WITH RELATIVELY SMALLER BUYERS ON A RETAIL LEVEL OR WHOLESALE LEVEL.



Outback and all that potential to these account managers, I'm sure their attitude would come off differently."

Whether it's selling Reese's Pieces at a 700 percent markup in imported goods markets or delivering watered-down service to small yet successful businesses, it's all interrelated: Korea tends to dilute service standards over small financial gains when dealing with relatively smaller buyers on both retail and wholesale levels.

Long-time expat Kip Richardson saw this weakness as an opportunity. Opting to inject a service-oriented business model into his own business, High Street Market, he is attempting to bring an air of legitimacy to the past turbulence he believes has gripped the import market industry in Korea. In addition, he has seen to it that these service levels have crossed over into Authentic Meats, his other business that deals in wholesale meats and products for restaurants in Korea.

According to Wayne Gold, owner of Wolfhound Pub and Reilly's Taphouse, "HSM and Authentic Meats go so far as to take my recipes and pre-make them before shipping, which reduces my manpower costs in the kitchen." When faced with the challenges of navigating a set of contradicting English and Korean manuals for some new kitchen equipment, Dan Vroon of Craftworks called up Kip for some advice, who promptly sent over a staff member to help them sort it out, despite it having no direct link to their meat supply agreement. It was just a show of respect to a customer and putting service first, even when money is not presently in play. Maple Tree's Hong remembers a similar experience: an instance when Kip's Authentic Meats sent him 10 million won in cuts of meat that weren't up to expectations and Kip made the prompt decision to take a loss on the full amount and send him the correct order. "It's a culture thing, as much as it is a language thing," Hong explains. High Street Market's retail customers are also singing a similar tune. "I used to go out of my way to get certain things from Itaewon. The fact that HSM delivers these things has been a game-changer", says Brian, a long-term expat. Another customer, Jen, admits it has long been a struggle for finding vegan products, let alone retailers who have their heads around how customers think. She states, "So many stores try to provide these things and get foreign feedback on how to improve, but there's a general lack of follow-through. My experience with dealing with HSM staff has revealed that not only can they engage in knowledgeable conversation about vegan products, but they actually work to implement customer feedback."

Where foreign expats have established the demand, Koreans have often fumbled on how to service it. But customer-first enterprises led by expats like Kip Richardson are snatching up that ball and finding themselves alone in the end zone. Only time will tell if Korean businesses will notice how the game is changing and evolve into a service-driven mindset when it comes to individual buyers and small businesses.

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LIFE ON THE FLY

BOB AND TRISH EVANS ARE MORE THAN JUST JUGGLERS - THEY JOGGLE AND SWUGGLE, TOO

Story by **Remy Raitt** / Photos by **Alee Schwarz**

"WE'RE ONE OF THE FEW HAPPILY MARRIED COUPLES THAT ENJOY THROWING THINGS AT EACH OTHER," Bob Evans says as he hurls a handful of clubs at his wife, Trish. Machetes used to be their ammunition of choice, but those proved impossible to get past customs when the pair moved to Korea in February of this year.

Instead, the record-breaking couple exported their unique brand of entertaining athleticism from the United States and has been delighting Korean crowds ever since with their impressive acrobatic juggling.

The self-described "hippie athletes" met as successful college sportspeople while studying in Michigan. Once they wrapped up their collegiate sporting careers in 2007, the Evanses found themselves with an abundance of free time and unspent energy. During this time, a friend introduced them to three-ball juggling, something the pair immediately

took to. "At this point, we were engaged to be married and we joked that juggling together was our premarital counseling," Bob says.

"Along with juggling, we also dabbled in hula-hooping for fitness, rock climbing, ballroom dancing, water polo and backwards running. But out of all those new activities, juggling was the one that really stuck - although we do have a swing-dance juggling routine in our show and we still enjoy a good backwards run every once in a while."

While Trish wrapped up her studies in 2008, Bob began performing juggling shows with a friend, with Trish continuing to practice with them. The couple also learned to unicycle, and when they moved to Arizona to fulfill teaching positions the following year, Bob says the real spark behind the now-successful brand "Bob and Trish," juggling and unicycling, was ignited.



'WE'RE ONE OF THE FEW HAPPILY MARRIED COUPLES THAT ENJOY THROWING THINGS AT EACH OTHER.' – BOB EVANS

'WE LIKE TO THINK OF JUGGLING AS A MINISTRY, NOT RELIGIOUS, BUT JUST SOMETHING THAT CAN BE OF SERVICE TO THE COMMON GOOD.' – BOB EVANS

'WE PRACTICED LIKE SERIOUS ATHLETES, BUT WE WERE ALSO PRETTY CHILL AND HIPPIE ABOUT IT AS A BUSINESS OR SUPER-SERIOUS VENTURE.' – BOB EVANS





After joining the Arizona Juggling Club and picking up new acrobatic and juggling skills, the two were encouraged by their peers to begin performing. For the following three years, Bob and Trish performed almost every weekend.

"We performed hundreds of shows, which was instrumental in our development as entertainers," Bob says. "Even though we were performing a lot, we never thought of juggling as anything more than a hobby. We did a lot of free shows for charities and other benefit events. We practiced like serious athletes, but we were also pretty chill and hippie about it as a business or super-serious venture."

By 2011, the pair was ready for a new adventure and embarked on a nine-month road trip around the States, taking their increasingly impressive juggling repertoire along for the ride.

This is when the two began joggling (juggling while jogging), a skill that would earn them both world records. Forty-seven states (Trish says they accidentally forgot Nevada) and 33 running races while joggling later, the Evanses had built quite a name for themselves among the country's regular race goers.

"It's easy to get a legendary reputation, especially on tour, when you come in as these mystery people who not only juggle the whole way through but win the race too," Bob says.

"We used to arrive in a town, entertain the kids, win the races and then disappear," Trish adds.

The Evanses would soon start juggling while competing in triathlons, too. But first, they clinched the men's and women's world records for running the fastest 5-kilometer and 10-kilometer while juggling — with Bob joggling the 5K in 16.34 minutes and the 10K in 34.50 minutes, and Trish the 5K in 19.46 minutes and the 10K in 42.58 minutes.

The pair completed their first triathlon in similar form by joggling the running leg and juggling while atop a unicycle for the bicycle part. For the swimming leg, they introduced something new into their repertoire: swuggling (juggling while swimming on your back). In the process, Trish picked

up another record as the first woman to complete a triathlon while juggling and they raised money for the Special Olympics USA.

In Korea, where they now live and work, the two continue to draw breaths and excited applause from audiences while imparting both acrobatic skills and their positive outlook on life.

They have more than 2,000 likes on their Facebook page and a huge number of hits on their YouTube channel, which includes monthly basketball trick shots (while juggling, obviously).

"Soon after learning to juggle, we realized it was something that brought people a lot of joy," Bob says. "Because of this, we like to think of juggling as a ministry, not religious, but just something that can be of service to the common good."

The couple, who teach English from their home base in Cheongju, North Chungcheong Province, has found juggling an effective way to share life lessons with both their students and general audiences alike, sneaking the tutorials in between the friendly banter, juggling, unicycling and acrobatics.

Through it all, the two have learned a lot about each other, they say.

"We like the creative tension that comes while creating, practicing and performing together," Bob says. "Some of the tensest times in our marriage have come during difficult practice sessions, but juggling has given us the opportunity to learn some important relationship skills. It's a safe place, because at the end of the day, it is only juggling."

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MORE INFO

Visit Bob and Trish Evans' websites at bobandtrish.com, www.facebook.com/BobandTrishJuggling and youtube.com/bobandtrishjuggling

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EX-KOREA EXPAT THROWS CHARITY GIG FOR PERUVIAN SCHOOLS

PUNK FOR PERU

Story by **Ian Henderson** / Photos by **Ken Robinson** and **courtesy of Caroline Pardue**

For expats in Seoul, the occasional gripe about adapting to life in Korea is almost second nature, and in some ways it's part of the job description. Yes, bemoaning the hurdles serves as a sort of catharsis and usually helps take the edge off daily frustrations, but most will admit that things are actually pretty cushy here, especially when speaking with members of the ESL ranks who have moved on to teach or volunteer in less economically developed locales. This revelation was the genesis of the idea for a punk rock benefit on Nov. 9 in Hongdae.

The show will benefit children in an impoverished area of Peru where parents have to splurge to buy textbooks while struggling with the cost of keeping the lights on.

The idea started with Caroline Pardue, who is now the education coordinator for the Huanchaco Education and Learning Program, also known as HELP English. HELP is part of an NGO called Otra Cosa Network, a U.K.- and Peruvian-registered charity that provides free English classes to underprivileged students in low-income areas of Huanchaco, Peru.

Pardue is originally from Texas, but spent most of her life growing up in the Philippines before a period of teaching in Korea. She currently teaches at Las Lomas Primary School, the only government-funded school in the shantytown of Las Lomas. She has been volunteering in Peru for several months and recently reached out to friends and contacts in Korea for assistance.

This is where Jeff Moses entered the picture. Moses, a long-

term Seoul resident and teacher, is a member of the punk band "... Whatever That Means" and also does booking at Club Spot near the park in Hongdae. He and his wife have been booking shows and releasing CDs under the name World Domination, Inc. for almost five years.

The pair is responsible for securing acts for Club Spot's Second Saturdays shows, which are monthly late-night parties that typically feature six to seven bands. This month's Second Saturdays show will be a fundraiser for the Las Lomas school.

Moses says he was compelled to help when he heard about the conditions at Pardue's school.

"I knew that (Caroline) was working in Peru, but had no idea how poor the area she was working in was," Moses says. "Trash (Moses' wife) and I agreed to use the November Second Saturdays event to help out her students on the spot."

The lineup is quite a good potpourri of Korea's punk scene. Currently booked are No. 1 Korean — one of Seoul's longest-running and most upbeat ska bands — and Heimlich County Gun Club, which is fronted by Suck Stuff's former guitarist and has a very country-infused, punk rock sound comparable to Social Distortion.

Seoul City Suicides, a known purveyor of stoner rock meets punk rock, is also part of the lineup. They haven't played in well over a year since their drummer moved back to New Zealand, but he and his wife are coming back to Seoul for a short holiday



THE SHOW WILL BENEFIT CHILDREN IN AN IMPOVERISHED AREA OF PERU WHERE PARENTS HAVE TO SPLURGE TO BUY TEXTBOOKS WHILE STRUGGLING WITH THE COST OF KEEPING THE LIGHTS ON.

to show off their new baby boy and play a few shows, starting with this gig.

Also on the bill is Seoul's newest thrash-punk band, My Man Mike. They just got back from a very successful two-month tour through Europe and will be playing tracks off their new album.

And finally, Moses' own band will also be taking the stage. Their sound hearkens back to very American, '90s punk rock, with major influences from Bad Religion, The Descendents and Face to Face.

As of this writing, there are more bands being contacted about joining the bill.

Moses is happy to report that all proceeds from the benefit will go to Pardue's school. The goal is to raise enough money to buy single copies of several different textbooks for the teachers to use in class. Any leftover money after that will be used for other needed classroom supplies.

With amazing music and free drinks, Second Saturdays is a party worth checking out. You'd also be helping to fulfill the educational dreams of some very thankful children – which is very punk rock.

GROOVE

MORE INFO

Second Saturdays benefit for Las Lomas Primary School in Peru (www.otracosa.org)

Location: Club Spot

Date and time: Nov. 9 from 10 p.m. to 2 a.m.

Admission 15,000 won, with a one-hour open bar

Directions: Hongik University Station, line 2, exit 9. Club Spot is on the street facing the playground next to Smoothie King.

For more information, visit facebook.com/ClubSpotHongdae/ info, or cafe.daum.net/clubspot.



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FRIENDS RALLY TO RAISE MONEY FOR INJURED EXPAT SEOUL FOR SCHOFIELD

Story by **Leslie Finlay** / Photo courtesy of the **Schofield family**



Former Seoulite Mark Schofield woke up at Vachira Phuket Hospital five days after he was involved in a nearly fatal scooter accident on the evening of Sept. 6. The crash left him with extensive injuries, including a broken maxilla, a broken collarbone and right arm, a shattered eye socket and brain trauma.

Just over five weeks later, he was walking on his own and on a plane back to Canada, where he will continue his recovery.

According to his brother, Scott, the doctors still do not know the extent of the brain trauma he has suffered and are not yet sure if he has fully regained the sight in his left eye.

Although Mark is now able to recognize his parents and his wife, Rachel, his memory is still quite limited and, according to the family, he still asks regularly about how he got into the situation. Though Mark has slowly become more capable of verbal communication, as Scott explains, "We are not certain how well he will remember the events when he is more lucid."

"He was watching 'Titanic' with dad and said he had never seen the movie before," Scott wrote on a fund-raising website the family set up to help defray Mark's medical expenses. "When dad asked if he knew about the true event or the story of the shipwreck, he said he didn't know anything about it."

The 34-year-old Canadian had recently arrived in Phuket to assume a job teaching at Kajonkietsuksa International School. Prior to that, he spent seven years in Seoul where he was a teacher in Yeoksam and an avid football player with the Seoul Celtics in the Seoul Sunday Football Team. It's also where he met his wife, Rachel, who he married in June.

"Mark was a regular face in and around Itaewon," says Heather Ryan, one of Mark's close friends. "(He) never missed an event where he could spend time with friends and have a laugh."

Mark was alone on the night of the accident, and the details of what happened are still unclear, but Scott reported on the website that Mark was on a scooter when he swerved to miss something and hit a telephone pole. He also wrote that it was a night "with significant rainfall" and that there was alcohol in Mark's blood when he was admitted to the hospital.

Kajonkietsuksa International School has since told Mark's parents it has a zero-tolerance policy in their medical coverage for injuries sustained under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Friends and family have been unable to access the contract to verify this, but when Mark's parents learned of the accident, they received an email from the school that made it clear that the employer would not be covering the medical bills.

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- HEATHER RYAN

SEOUL FOR SCHOFIELD

Facing enormous medical costs, the Schofield family set up a website through youcaring.com on Sept. 11 to help raise money for his bills and future treatment. In two days, the \$40,000 goal had been met, and as of Oct. 20 the site had raised \$64,525.

According to Scott, about 10 percent of the total has been donated by friends that Mark made in Korea, not including the friends from home who he went to Korea with originally.

"Mark seems to have touched as many people over (in Korea) in the short time he was in Seoul as he has back at home in Nova Scotia," Scott says, adding that an overwhelming amount of support has come from total strangers or anonymous donors.

"I feel that people our age, young adults, can imagine a nightmare like this happening to themselves or loved ones," he says. "Most of us have traveled abroad ourselves, intended to travel or know friends and/or family that have traveled alone and would like to think there would be support if something happened."

That sentiment was echoed by Mark's friend, Heather Ryan, who helped put together a fundraiser for him in Seoul.

"The expat community is a family," Ryan says. "We must stick together and help each other whenever trouble arises — without each other we wouldn't survive."

The Seoul for Schofield event, held a week after the accident on Sept. 13 at one of Mark's favorite pubs, the Wolfhound, raised more than \$5,000 through sales of Seoul for Schofield T-shirts, a donation from the bar, an auction and a raffle with prizes donated by bars and restaurants in Itaewon. Another fundraiser, a pub crawl through Gyeongnidan, was held Oct. 12 and raised roughly 1 million won.

HOMEWARD BOUND

According to the family, Mark's physical improvement has been remarkable, and the doctors at Vachira Hospital cleared Mark to return to Canada in time for his native country's Thanksgiving holiday on Oct. 14. He arrived home Oct. 9 and will continue his recovery and rehabilitation at the QEII Health Sciences Centre in Halifax.

Ryan says that before Mark left, there were already some signs of his personality coming through. She said a visiting friend was able to tell him about the fundraiser in Seoul and some of the "antics that were done in his honor to raise money ... which amused him quite a bit apparently."

The friend was also able to deliver Seoul for Schofield t-shirts to Mark and the family, along with a Canadian flag that was signed with well wishes from those in attendance at the fundraising party.

"He has been showing interest in the soccer games that have been on TV as well, even expressing disappointment at a loss earlier in the week," Ryan says. "He was even caught rolling his eyes at his mom while she was reading (the children's book by Robert Munsch) 'Love You Forever' to him."

GROOVE

MORE INFO

To make a donation or leave a note for Mark and the Schofield family, visit www.youcaring.com and search for Mark Schofield.



Woo-ri Ko,
Dental Hygienist

S. Ana Kim, DMD

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THE DOLLS ARE BACK AND SO IS THE PARTY

LITTLE TRAVELLERS KOREA PUTS ON RUBBER SEOUL NOV. 30,
SPONSORED BY GROOVE KOREA

Story, Photos and Illustrations courtesy of **Little Travellers Korea**



By now, those little dolls handmade by women at the Hillcrest AIDS Center in South Africa have become a ubiquitous part of the Seoul charity scene. They also bring to mind at least three things: creativity, a cause and lots and lots of awesome music.

For wherever there is a Little Traveller, a charity concert is not too far away. The dolls are back this month as the annual Rubber Seoul hits Hongdae on Nov. 30 for a night filled with great music by around 20 of Korea's funnest underground rock bands performing in five venues.

Organized by Little Travellers Korea and sponsored by Groove Korea, Rubber Seoul is held every year to promote AIDS awareness on (or close to) World AIDS Day, which is Dec. 1. Little Travellers Korea is a local nonprofit organization that holds events — including the ever-popular Seoul Photo Scavenger Hunt — to raise money for AIDS/HIV research and aid the KwaZulu-Natal province in Africa, where over 40 percent of the population has contracted the disease.

Since launching in 2008, Rubber Seoul has invited Korean and expat bands like Angry Bear, Magna Fall and Love X Stereo to play at

five venues that have all donated their time and space. This year's hosts are Club TA, GOG-OS2, Club FF, DGBD and Club Freebird, and the lineup has yet to be released.

One change for 2013 is that Little Travellers Korea organizer Jenny Maxwell has handed over the reins to Caitlin Gillespie, who plans to keep the Rubber Seoul tradition alive as well as bring in more events for next year.

"Jenny Maxwell did a great job organizing Rubber Seoul in the past, so they are big shoes to fill," Gillespie says. "But in the end, there will be a wonderful night filled with music, fun and fundraising for a good cause."

An all-entry pass to the five venues is 10,000 won, which also includes a Little Traveller for every concert goer. The night starts at 9 p.m. and continues until the wee hours of the morning with music and a raffle for prizes.

The group hopes to raise over 8 million won through this year's Rubber Seoul. All proceeds from the night will be donated to the Hillcrest AIDS Center.

As an all-volunteer event, Rubber Seoul is seeking about 100 people to help out with sales, promotions and at the door. Contact Little Travellers Korea for details.

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MORE INFO

Find "Little Travellers Korea" on Facebook or email korea@littletravellers.net



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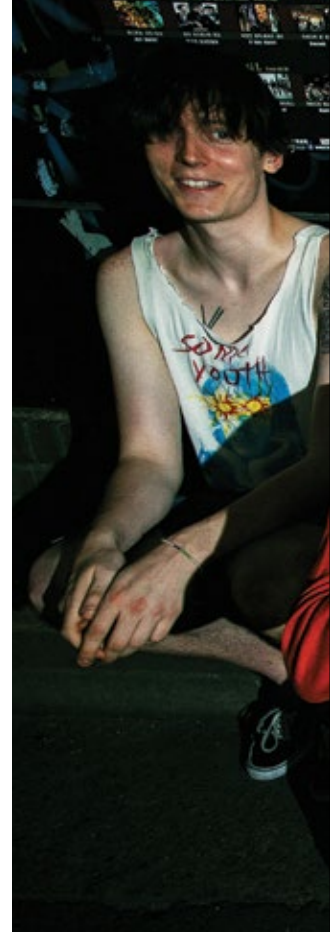


CBHK.ORG

POSSIBLY THE LOUDEST BAND IN KOREA

ON THE SAVAGE SOUND OF YUPPIE KILLER

Interview by **Dave Hazzan**
Photos courtesy **Ken Robinson**



On a side street in Seoul's Mullae-dong, Yuppie Killer is mixing up the riot punch. Like the witches of Macbeth, they add their ingredients to the bucket: vodka, two bottles of soju, red wine (a gift), two cans of Hot Six, Sprite and peach juice. The contents are then ladled out to thirsty punks.

Yuppie Killer has been playing outstanding, head-splitting, pogo-jumping, slamming-into-your-neighbor hardcore music with their current lineup for six months now. Tim from Ottawa sings, Iain from Toronto plays guitar, Jay from Saskatoon plays bass and Graham from California plays drums. Together, they insist they are "the loudest goddamn band in Seoul."

We're doing the interview on a roof in Mullae while enjoying the riot punch. For unexplained reasons, they won't do the interview unless everyone takes his shirt off. They can be difficult that way.

Yuppie Killer is a great band, which has not gone unnoticed in the rest of Korea. In Daegu, they were booked into a GI club because, in their words, "we play fucking Journey and Kansas." Jay can neither confirm nor deny that he has a restraining order filed against him there. In Daejeon, they played at a Mexican bar in front of four paying customers, but those customers left after Tim dropkicked the couch they were sitting on. They did Busan too, but had to "get out in a hurry because, you know — bottle fights."

In Seoul they play the DIY venues that punks have reclaimed: old warehouses, abandoned storefronts, empty garages and the like, with their friends the Veggies, the Kitsches, Les Sales and others. They play in a mutually supportive and energetic hardcore and punk scene that exists as a

literal screaming argument against manufactured Korean music.

"The glass ceiling here is crushingly low for anyone who doesn't have an entertainment company behind them," Iain says. "The great genius of hardcore is that the audience and the band are on absolute equal footing. You cannot have one without the other." In truth, however, they often perform without much of an audience.

Hardcore can be difficult to comprehend for those who are new to the music. "To the untrained ear, hardcore sounds like a bunch of white boys making noise for no reason," Graham says. "But there are actually very complex song structures, very fast movements; it's not just the same three chords."

"Hardcore is sometimes seen as a lesser art because it's more direct and it's noisier," says Iain. But to him, the genre "is like other music, without unnecessary punctuation." Indeed, you do not attend a Yuppie Killer show to kick back and relax. The songs are loud, short and fast.



Tim's lyrics, if you can understand them, express different emotions and are heavily layered. "I write songs that are very superficial on the surface but have a great deal of meaning," he says. The song "Hate Crimes" is about their generation not knowing what they're doing. They have songs about winter, asbestos, homelessness, low-income housing, corporate greed and drug-loving Toronto mayor Rob Ford.

A trip last year to Dokdo inspired them to write "Dokdo Revenge Trilogy." "As far as I can tell by the police presence there, it is certainly Korean land," says Tim. "We had several warnings about our conduct."

The punk scene in Korea is fun, supportive and lively, but it is also very small. It's not uncommon for the only people at the shows to be the other bands performing. Tim says they see a lot of kids around in Ramones shirts and punk clothes, but not at the punk shows. "It's very discouraging," he says. "If you like the music and you support the music, then you need to be an active participant in it."

They insist they do it because it's fun. That's what people always say; but in the case of a hardcore band in Korea, it might just be true.

"We don't make any money doing this," he adds. "There's no prestige. We don't get beautiful women. We don't get paid. We don't get social status. People don't recognize us on the street. All we get is self-satisfaction and I've honestly never put as much hard work into anything in my entire life as I have this band."

And what happens when they leave Korea and go back home? "Who's leaving Korea? "From an international resident point of view, we've used this band very nicely to see the country, to meet new people, to meet locals," Tim says. "We've done it in a very different way, through hardcore music. We're seeing new things people have not seen, things that you don't read about on an Eat Your Kimchi blog."

"All we do is what we've always wanted to do. We just do it here. Find your own Korea." More riot punch, please.

GROOVE

MORE INFO

Yuppie Killer's new album will be out this month, as will a split with garage band Les Sales.

Check out yuppiekiller.bandcamp.com for more info, and be sure to check out these killer DIY punk bands as well: Banran, Scumraid, Les Sales, Genius, Bamseom Pirates, Mixed Blood, Animal Anthem, Something Fierce, My Man Mike, The Kitsches, 11:11, Find The Spot, The Veggers, Things We Say, Fuckushi Oyo.

Check out the Korean Punk and Hardcore Facebook group for show and band info: [facebook.com/koreanpunkandhardcore](https://www.facebook.com/koreanpunkandhardcore).





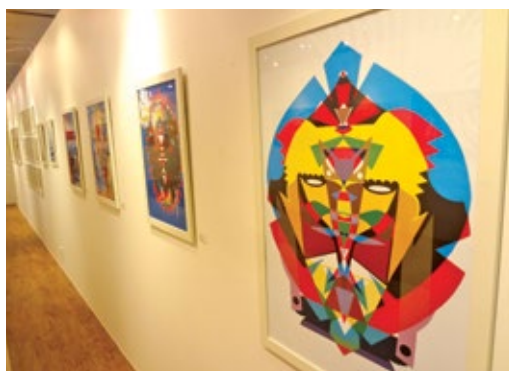
BRITISH COUPLE BREAKS INTO KOREA'S ART SCENE

FUSION ART

Interview by **Mark V. Cornish** / Artwork by **Leon Sparkes and Deborah Brogden**

Solo artists Leon Sparkes and Deborah Brogden met in a bar in Birmingham, England three years ago. After spending time together and sharing their passion for art they decided to merge their styles. They soon became partners in both business and romance. Their positivity and dedication is reflected in the vibrant colors and motifs that emerge throughout their work. Their collaboration also spurred the duo on in their journey through Korea's art scene. They feed off one another's enthusiasm to produce creative works in a variety of mediums – from graffiti and digital art to music, illustrations and paintings.

Groove Korea caught up with the English couple before a live art event, where they produced a large two-piece canvas, at Jung Art Gallery in Yongin.



Groove Korea: Where does the name Illopetals come from?

Brogden: Well, when Leon started out in freelance his name was Illographics. And when I started out I came up with the name Petals and Patterns. So when we started fusing our styles, we thought, "Let's make our name something simple and catchy," and we fused our names to Illopetals.

When you are drawing or creating a piece of art, how do you go about creating the work together? Can you explain the process?

Sparkes: I would mainly draw characters and illustrations and then Debbie would fill it in with color and patterns and more detail. It just kind of progresses in that sense. Brogden: We are both very freestyle and open-minded. Leon never tells me what to do and I don't tell him what to do. It is a natural process that just develops organically.

Do you have a preferred medium to work with?

Sparkes: Not really... I guess we've been working on a variety of mediums. Our main medium though is pen and paper... We've also been working a lot on digital music as well, so that's just a completely new field altogether where we use music software to create music, create instrumentals, use vocals and then add that into it. So again, it is just a mix of things.

Brogden: I guess if you were to say to me, "I'll give you any medium, any material," I'd have to say paint and markers, especially Posca pens, and a really nice, smooth wall, is a perfect surface to get a nice flow. With such a big space you can get a perfect finish.

Sparkes: Everything altogether is one big experiment. We are trying different things out, experimenting with our own works together, and just having fun with it and seeing where it takes us. And so far it has taken us here, and we've had a great response from people who have seen our work.

Can you describe what work was like for you back in the U.K.?

Brogden: I guess it was funny because I was teaching until I met you (points at Leon and laughs). We complement each other in that I am very good at research, writing-off and communicating to people, and Leon is excellent with Photoshop, getting the images together, the ideas and the concepts... So because we had those skills that matched, we were able to tap into City Council projects, we did exhibitions together in big galleries, we did musical art projects where we were commissioned by Punch Records. We tapped into different things, but essentially always community art. It was always the bringing together of people, whether it was educational, through workshops, or whether it was through a festival or celebration of some kind. So we became project leaders and workshop coordinators.

What made you two decide to come to Korea?

Brogden: I was here 10 years ago when Korea was not as developed as it is now, so I knew the deal with Korea. I knew it was cool; I knew the people were lovely; I knew a bit about the society; and I knew what it was like to teach English as a foreign language. We were a bit fed up with England. Leon had lived in Birmingham his whole life, so I was like, "Let's go to Korea, it's amazing."

How has the subject matter or themes in your art changed since you came to Korea?

Brogden: Leon has always drawn characters and scenes, so I've noticed recently that in his characters and in his scenes, things have gotten a little bit more quirky (looks at Leon). Maybe it's because we are teaching art at schools here. We see a lot of Korean

kids and bear hats and other quirky things in fashion here. So it's these quirky and cutesy things that I see in your work. For me, I'm immersed in my work, but a lot of people have said that my patterns and mandalas are really "Korean." You know how you will look at the temples and you'll see the lotus flowers and the Buddhist designs... but I'm not aware of that (taking shape in my art). I don't tend to research or draw from things, it just comes from within, so maybe it (Korea) is influencing and I'm not totally aware.

Is your work in Korea full-time or part-time?

Sparkes: We are working here as teachers, so that is our full-time job. But whenever we have time or chances, we just get together and try to push the work out.

Brogden: I feel we are working full time as teachers and part time as artists – the amount of work we do in our free time is pretty much a second job.

Can you talk a little bit about the art scene in Korea and if and how it is different from back home?

Sparkes: We both are influenced by graffiti. And I guess here, graffiti isn't really well known or accepted. You can only go to a few areas, like Hongdae, and the streets are hammered with stickers, graffiti, faces, murals, which is more our style. But most of the work we have seen is more traditional. We are indeed blown away by a lot of the art that we see, and think that it is really focused on technique. It is not as abstract as it is in England.

Brogden: Yeah, it is not as contemporary. You do have a lot of comic book influence, which we like. There is certainly a lot of art and a lot of art spaces, and I think there are some great art schools too ... but perhaps it is a bit lacking in more contemporary stuff that pushes the boundaries a bit more. ... I do think that people love the graffiti scene and that they are trying to bring that here – in a gallery or into a framed piece of art.

GROOVE



MORE INFO

Check out Leon and Deborah's work at www.leonsparkes.tumblr.com and www.petalsandpatterns.tumblr.com or on Facebook at facebook.com/illopetals.

GETTING THERE

Jung Art Gallery is located on the fourth floor of the Dongbaek E-mart complex in Giheung-gu, Yongin, Gyeonggi Province.

ONE WEEKEND, ONE SHORT FILM,
AN EXPERIENCE NEVER FORGOTTEN

48 HOURS OF MOVIE MADNESS

Story by **Ken Fibbe**

Photos by **Michele Farley, Sabrina Hill**
and courtesy of the **48 Hour Film Project**



The importance of persistence in filmmaking can never be understated. Francis Ford Coppola even likened it to a game, saying that you should play “with all your cards, all your dice and whatever else you’ve got.”

This mindset is familiar with local filmmakers — especially to those Seoulites who’ve made movies at hyper-speed during a previous year’s 48 Hour Film Project.

This November, the 48 Hour Film Project returns for its fourth installment in Seoul, an event during which aspiring and professional filmmakers alike can join together to make a short film in a frantic, sleep-deprived campaign.

Launched locally in 2009, the project is designed for “all different kinds of people with different backgrounds and experience levels to come under one creative umbrella to use their skills to do something special in film,” said Joseph Kim, who heads the Seoul-based event.

Started in 2001 in the United States, the 48 Hour Film Project now spans over 120 cities and is expected to attract more than 60,000 participants this year. Teams will vie to make the best four- to seven-minute short film, but awards are also given for best directing, best writing, best cinematography, best editing and best actor, to name a few.

On the Friday night before the competition, teams are given four criteria for the film: a genre, a prop, a line of dialogue and a character. From there they must storyboard, write, shoot, edit, score, design and sometimes animate their way through the wee hours until

the Sunday night deadline.

Couple those caveats with varying auteurs’ ideals for movie direction, and the end result is a mixed bag of artistic creativity.

In last year’s event, 41-year-old expat Wade Hawkins’s team was tasked with making a comedy.

The final product was “Mesozoic Mushroom,” a movie he described as “the discovery of ancient mushrooms that conduct an electrical field that had to be kept hidden from a secret society called ‘The Melvins.’”

“As a group we debated and tossed around so many ideas in the beginning,” he said. “It was challenging trying to narrow down what worked best and what we found funniest.” With five computers running, his 30-person team had many roles you would find on a typical Hollywood set, including sound and visual editors as well as assistants and scriptwriters.

In an attempt to overcompensate for the unknown, he even had a pair of 5- and 7-year-old girls — daughters of a crewmate — on standby, ready to act, “just in case we needed them for something.”

Quinn Knox was involved in a film last year that took an entirely different approach. He played the role of a demon in “Listening to Shadows,” a surrealist drama about a young woman searching for her long-lost sister, with “ambiguous tones about whether the search was for her sister or actually her spiritual self.”

And the airtight time frame spelled for some quirky and, at times, downright strange complications to deal with.

At one point they were shooting a rape and

murder scene in an “extremely sketchy alley” in Haebangchon at 4 in the morning, he said. When surrounding businesses started to open, confused and concerned shop owners began to take notice.

“There was blood everywhere and this actress is getting raped, so we had to have someone calm them down, explain to them in Korean what we were doing and convince them not to call the cops on us,” he recalled.

“The whole process is really challenging, but so much fun and a real bonding experience.”

All teams will have their films screened locally, with the location to be announced at the kickoff event on Nov. 29.

The winner will receive a 2 million won prize from What’s Next, a global consulting firm based in Seoul, and Eye2Eye Production, a Colorado-based company. Additionally, they will have the chance to see their film screened at Filmapalooza, to be held this March in New Orleans, Louisiana, and will be joined by Best of City filmmakers from around the world.

The international-award-winning crew will also have their movie showcased as part of the Cannes Film Festival’s Short Film Corner in 2014.

Last year, veteran filmmaker Son Da-kyeom was proud to be the first Korean whose team took home the local top prize. She flew to Los Angeles to see her film screened at the Best of City event.

Though she didn’t qualify for Cannes, she felt the event was ultimately rewarding and a hallmark in her career.



MORE INFO

The 48 Hour Film Project Seoul 2013

When: Nov. 29 – Dec. 1

Registration: 149,000 won per team if registered by Nov. 4;
200,000 won per team until Nov. 19;
250,000 won thereafter until spots are filled

Email: Seoul48HFP@gmail.com

Telephone: 010.5053.2897

Visit the official site at 48hourfilm.com/en/seoul and on Facebook at [facebook.com/48film](https://www.facebook.com/48film).

Groove Korea is the official media sponsor of the 48 Hour Film Project Seoul 2013.

"I was really happy to represent Korea, and show that Koreans can also make quality and engaging films at this event," Son said.

And though she had the rolodex that comes with 13 years' experience in various directing and writing roles in professional Korean films such as "미녀는 괴로워 (200 Pounds Beauty)" and "육혈포 강도단 (Twilight Gangsters)," she still met half of her 25-person team for the first time at an official event-sponsored meet-and-greet. Many of them were amateurs.

"It's great for networking. I highly recommend it to people who are interested in working in the film industry," she remarked.

Meet-and-greets have been set up again this year for those looking for a team or those wanting to add additional crew members to an existing one. This year's events are being held on Oct. 13 and 27 at JR's Pub in Itaewon from 2 to 6 p.m.

This networking aspect is the spark that led Joseph Kim to the event in the first place.

"The whole reason I came to Korea (in 2010) was to make a feature and I didn't know where to go or what to do," he said. "I found myself getting shut down by people who said, 'Come back when you are a professional.'"

Then after entering the event that same year, he said, "The same people who rejected me were now willing to work with me."

At the 2012 event, a local record of 50 teams participated, with some even going on to work with Kim on "Haebangchon," a feature film he is producing.

Yet whatever their reason for entering, Kim said participants will walk away with a proud sense of time well spent.

And with the right idea, he feels anyone could soon become the next rising star.

"It's not about making a seamless movie, or the perfect edit or perfect acting," he said. "It's about using your creative intuition. It could be making a movie with sticks or using a one-man crew. That's what is going to take you to Cannes."

GROOVE



BLACK LEATHER, RIPPED SINGLETs AND ALL-GIRL, PSYCHEDELIC ROCK

JUCK JUCK GRUNZIE

Story by **Sophie Boladeras**
Photos by **Dirk Schlottman**

JUCK JUCK GRUNZIE is

Ah-reum Lee (Vocals & synth)

Jee-hye Ham (Guitar)

Bong (Bass)

Geun-chang Park (Drums)

An unassuming little club in Hongdae named Salon Badabie has seen many up-and-coming indie bands perform on its cramped stage. In 2007, Juck Juck Grunzie made their debut in this crowded club as a loud, all-girl punk rock band from Seoul. Their music was well received, and in an ode to Nirvana the girls were clad solely in their lingerie as they belted out Nirvana's "Hairspray Queen" to a frenzied crowd.

Lately, the band's music has progressed from their early punk days to a more psychedelic and electronic sound. Vocalist Ah-reum Lee now plays synthesizer to create haunting and distorted vocals, and the band also has a male addition in drummer Geun-chang Park.

Groove Korea: How was your first ever gig as Juck Juck Grunzie? I heard you played in just your lingerie!

Ah-reum Lee: Our first performance was at Salon Badabie for a Kurt Cobain tribute concert. We played on stage for the first time and it sounded really good. We just wore our underwear and we were able to really let loose. We performed Nirvana's song "Hairspray Queen," and even now I still really like that song. If you ask us how we were able to dress like that, it seems like how I behave up on stage is a little different from how I actually am normally. Sometimes when I'm on stage performing it feels like I'm in a play.

Jee-hye Ham: Nirvana's "Hairspray Queen" is really intense; it's a wonderfully dark, dynamic and strong song. Krist Novoselic, who played bass for Nirvana from 1987–1994, took off his pants while performing "Hairspray Queen" at one of their very

early gigs. So we decided to play the song in our lingerie, which seemed to shock and entertain the audience. Doing that definitely got people talking, but it was merely us wanting to have some fun.

Do you feel more confident when you dress up?

Lee: We tend to get really nervous up on stage, but if we dress uniquely it helps to ignore the nerves.

Ham: A performance is not entirely about listening to the music, so I want to think about what will also make a visually appealing show.

Geun-chang Park: I don't really get that nervous or anything. The only thing that I'm thinking about is doing a good job.

Tell us about the formation of the band.

Lee: I met Jee-hye, who plays the guitar, when I was in my 20s. I wanted to form a fun, all-girl punk band. We are currently going in a slightly different direction, but I still want it to be fun, even if it's in a different way.

Ham: Ah-reum and I met and became friends in 2007 at a live club called Salon Badabie. We had both broken up with our boyfriends at around the same time and we became really close. We wanted to do something fun together. First, the two of us practiced with just an acoustic guitar and an accordion, but ultimately we wanted to start a proper band so we looked for other members. Initially, we had four female members, but our drummer and bassist left the band so we asked Bong to join us and later on we met our drummer Geun-chang through a mutual friend.

MORE INFO

Salon Badabie is not far from the main gate of Hongik University. Subway station Hongik University, line 2, exit 9.
Address: Seoul, Mapo-gu, Donggyo-dong 182-5

Bong: I became close to Jee-hye and Ah-reum while I was in a band called Pico Machuri. After that band broke up, I was wandering about aimlessly when someone suggested that I play bass for Juck Juck Grunzie.

I saw you play in the tiny Salon Badabie. Do you enjoy the close proximity with the audience at small venues, or do you prefer larger shows?

Ham: We often play on large stages at regional events or large rock festivals held over the summer, but this is not something that happens all year round. Recently, we have mostly been performing at small venues on the weekends, like Salon Badabie. We are more accustomed to performing on a stage where we are close to the audience, and this closeness makes it easier for us to convey more energy. Also, most of the audience members who come out to the smaller live clubs are either familiar with our music or enjoy listening to indie music. On the other hand, many of those who come out to the bigger stages haven't heard of us before. So, on the big stages we worry about how to effectively convey our music to an audience who might not know about our band.

Bong: We have experienced stage fright

before. Now it's much better than it used to be and we all have more confidence, but it's still not easy to make eye contact with the audience. I like the small stages because, even if you don't look into the crowd's eyes, you can still really sense their energy and hear their voices.

Lee: I like bigger stages better — there is better equipment and you can hear the sound vividly. I want the audience to hear all of the elements in our music.

Park: I get excited on the big stages and feel at ease performing on them.

Some of your music is haunting and eerie. What do you sing about?

Ham: When making music, we tend to stay true to our instinctive feelings. We express inner feelings that have been suppressed, like feelings from dreams such as fear or bizarreness. It's enjoyable to reinterpret feelings and dreams through music.

Lee: We have a song about the comfort women issue, and a song about the Alice Complex; each song has a different story. Often if I think of a nightmare I will write about it. Recently, I wanted to express the things I haven't been able to express, and it seems that many frightening elements are coming out.

Is performing live a cathartic experience for you?

Lee: My body hurts after I perform; it's like I've been possessed. It doesn't have to be a feeling of extreme catharsis, but I hate feeling that a performance was the same as another, even if the venue and audience were different.

Bong: Every show is different; I tend to be influenced by the acoustics of the venue.

Park: I put so much effort into it so my hands shake, but it's gotten a lot better.

Your music is loud, strong and assertive. Do you feel that way in your life?

Ham: In reality we are all very polite and gentle people. Not only that, but with the exception of Geun-chang, we actually don't like drinking. But the music we make is not like that, which is so ironic.

Bong: Actually, I could never be like that, so I want to satisfy my desires through music.

Lee: Originally, I was really vulnerable and weak, but while playing music with Juck Juck Grunzie I became stronger. From my 20s until now, I embraced the style of our music and because people saw me that way, it seemed to influence me in my personal life too.

GROOVE





ARTIST'S JOURNEY

INTERVIEW WITH DAN ADAMS, VISUAL EFFECTS ARTIST

Interview by **Wilfred Lee** / Photos courtesy **Dan Adams**

Contributing behind the curtain of numerous expat films in Korea such as “Amiss,” “The Inside” and the currently in development “Haebangchon,” Dan Adams has been an indispensable asset to the film community as a VFX artist. Artist’s Journey’s Wilfred Lee talked with him about his contributions and the future of VFX for the everyday filmmaker.

Artist's Journey: What inspired you to get into VFX?

Dan Adams: I don't think there was ever any one factor that inspired me to get involved with VFX. I think it was more of a progression in new media from the things I was interested in at the time, to the more interesting things they led me to. My interest was always in graphic design (this would be my mother's influence), which led into aspects of 3-D and television, which then of course led to my current area of interest: visual effects and compositing.

What is VFX?

Well, there is a key distinction between special effects and visual effects. SFX are created using traditional things like makeup, explosions, costumes, robotics, etc. All of these elements of special effects are created for use in a scene, on set and in front of the camera.

Visual effects, on the other hand, is a term used to describe the manipulation of the film shot in the camera to generate objects, effects and simulations of anything required by the director which would be otherwise unavailable or too costly to produce with special effects alone.

How has VFX affected the entertainment industry?

Visual effects has really opened up the doors for directors and writers who would be otherwise bound by the constraints on our physical world (like the laws of physics, for one) and often times the restrictions on budgets for effects which are costly to replicate on film, but cheap to create on a computer and superimpose back onto film later.

What projects have you been helping develop?

A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away, I worked in Vancouver for a visual effects company called Rainmaker studios. But honestly, my experience in the studio and with big-budget movies really ended up turning me off of the whole industry. The amount of creative freedom and expression on a big movie like these was less than 0 for 99 percent of the creative, talented people who worked on them. The decisions and the creative vision were always given, never coaxed out of people. That was just not where I wanted to be.

Lately I have been working with the indie film industry, especially in Korea, and I have been involved in many projects in different areas of expertise. I really enjoy the freedom I have with indie directors, and with low-budget crews. It allows me to plan and execute a VFX shot with the freedom to take control and add my own style or flare to a shot. This is critical, and something most artists never get a chance to enjoy on a big-budget movie.

Most recently, I have been neck-deep in a documentary about "StarCraft 2" and a couple of the most popular foreign TV personalities here in Korea. It has been an excellent opportunity to have a huge amount of control and creative freedom. I am working closely with the director, Jeff Alejos, and the crew on it. I am very happy with my role as post-production supervisor, which includes the overseeing of the editing, mixing and, of course, the motion graphics and VFX.

What's makes VFX effective?

Believe it or not, my main interest in visual effects is in creating effects you will never notice. Many people want to work on the VFX for movies like "300," "Cloud Atlas," "Avatar" and so on, but honestly there is no tricking the viewer with these films. Everyone with functioning disbelief is pretty confident there is no film crew on a planet full of large blue aliens. They know it's VFX, and they probably don't care. Very impressive, but not fooling anybody. I prefer the VFX of artists who can create a scene in a movie that the viewer is sure is real. That's the illusion, and that's the power. I think that's far more important than just awing someone with a two-hour movie that plays like an nVidia GeForce technical demonstration.

Where do you see the future of VFX going?

I think there's a huge leap in technology coming in website design, and composers and 3-D artists will be in high demand in the next five years for a medium which has been reserved for the super-nerd computer programmers. The time is coming when a trip on the internet will be indistinguishable from a trip to the movie theater.

GROOVE



MORE INFO

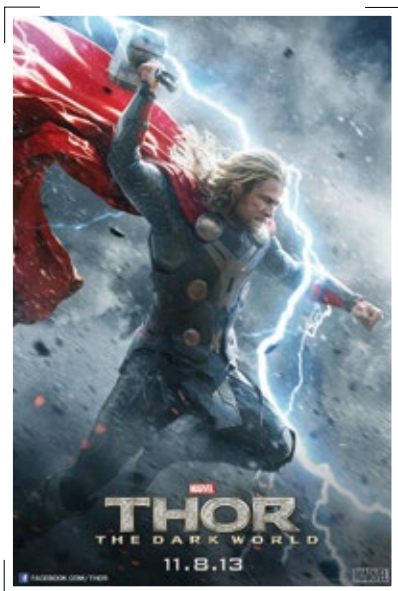
Visit Dan Adams' website at www.smorb.com.

AT THE BOX OFFICE THE BIG SCREEN

By Dean Crawford

Thor: The Dark World

Directed by Alan Taylor



Oct.
30 Fantasy, Action
130 minutes

November is the month of the moneymaking sequel. Not only do we have the second "Hunger Games" to look forward to, but also the sequel to 2011's "Thor," titled "Thor: The Dark World."

When the original version of the latter was first announced, I remember being quite skeptical about the film. I found Thor was an odd choice to anchor a movie, and I didn't see the appeal of watching a mythical god throw a hammer around for two hours. But to my surprise, I really enjoyed it. The film looked great and, I must admit, the other-worldly elements of the plot are what I enjoyed the most.

By all accounts, the sequel will focus a lot more on Asgard, which is great for me. According to Marvel Studios, this film sees Thor face an enemy that's perilous even by Asgard's standards. Described as a more "personal" journey, we are reassured that this film will reunite the hero with Jane Foster, who was only given a brief shout-out in the

"Avengers" plot.

With "Thor" director Kenneth Branagh deciding to vacate the director's chair for the sequel, the baton was then passed to Patty Jenkins. She was subsequently fired for "creative differences," so the project was then offered to Alan Taylor. A surprising choice when you consider the bulk of his directorial experience has been in television, but perhaps less so when you consider the major credit on his CV is "Game of Thrones." And again, it's also not so surprising when you realize that Marvel has a history of being cheap, often shortchanging its talent to rake in the profits. So much so that Robert Downey, Jr. felt the need to insist that his "Avengers" co-stars got bumper pay raises before he even considered signing on for another "Iron Man."

A smart move, as no doubt the Marvel money train will keep on rolling. Next stop, Asgard!

GROOVE

The Hunger Games: Catching Fire

Directed by Francis Lawrence



Nov.
21 Fantasy, Action
137 minutes

Months before the first "Hunger Games" had even been released, the film's production company, Lionsgate, had given the go-ahead to start work on the sequel. Pretty daring in this day and age, when you consider that other proposed franchises such as "Prince of Persia" (2010) and "The Lone Ranger" (2013) did exactly the same thing, but both bombed spectacularly at the box office. As it happened, "The Hunger Games" (2012) turned out to be a PG-13 version of Kinji Fukasaku's excellent "Battle Royale" (2000) and was a pretty decent movie.

Once the reaction to some controversial casting died down (well, controversial if you're racist...), the film went on to take nearly \$700 million at the box office, meaning the remaining novels in Suzanne Collins' "Hunger Games" series were guaranteed to get made.

The second installment in the "Hunger Games" trilogy is "Catching Fire," which picks up where the first left off. Katniss (Jennifer Lawrence) and Peeta (Josh Hutchinson) have safely returned home from

their victory, but the Capitol isn't happy with the manner of their win. The consequence is that Katniss and Peeta are forced to participate in the 75th Hunger Games, which again puts their lives and those of their families in danger.

The next installment of the franchise has already been announced, with the plan being to follow in the footsteps of "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows" (2010-11) and "The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn" (2011-12) by splitting the final book into two films. I'm sure the reason for this will be due to the fact that the forthcoming "The Hunger Games: Mockingjay" (2014-15) has so much ground to cover that they would be doing the fans a disservice if they didn't split the book into two films. It goes without saying, however, that the unofficial rationale is also, "We're going to milk you for every penny you have!"

Skepticism aside, if you're a fan of the books, then you have three more films to look forward to, starting with "Catching Fire."

GROOVE

KOREAN DVD CORNER THE SMALL SCREEN

By Dean Crawford

[G Drama 135 minutes]

"A Wonderful Moment" follows a musical director, Il-han (Kim Rae-won), who has just failed in his first attempt to put on a theatrical show. Still operating with a deluded sense of grandeur, Il-han enters a contest to become the creative director for an upcoming Korean musical that will head to Broadway. The task at hand? Find a new lead singer for the show.

The contestants must choose a lead singer through a blind casting call, and Il-han chooses Glory (Yeong-gwang), a half-Filipino man who has been rejected by all those around him. The one exception is his friend, Seong-jun, who is of African descent. The real challenge for Il-han isn't winning the competition and restoring his name, it's overcoming his prejudices to see the talent that lies beneath the color of Glory's skin.

Much like last year's excellent "Welcome to the Punch," the film explores what it's like to be an outsider in Korea and the obstacles they face. Seong-jun tells Glory that "people like us must dream responsibly." They both believe there's truth in this message because this is what they're so often told. Yet through their gifts, the pair are gradually accepted by their peers and their teachers.

One could argue that while the film does appear to be telling us that anyone can be accepted into mainstream society, the subtext is that you can only do so if you have talent. Glory is accepted because of his singing ability and Seong-jun is accepted because he is gifted at football. Leaving it at that, however, would be a pessimistic way to look at the film and I'm no pessimist. Instead, I choose to take it for the feel-good film it is. "A Wonderful Moment" celebrates diversity and shows that even though we may all have our faults, we can achieve our dreams no matter what the situation may be. I'm choosing to see the best in the film, just as everybody in the film chooses to see the best in Glory.

GROOVE

A Wonderful Moment

(마이 리틀 히어로)

Directed by Kim Seong-hun



[PG-13 Romantic Comedy 124 minutes]

What would you do if one day you were suddenly given the opportunity to live out the dreams that you thought had passed you by? Would you take it? Of course you would. But what if it meant that your husband or wife would have to sacrifice their dreams so that you could achieve yours? This is the premise behind Lee Suk-hun's romantic comedy, "Dancing Queen," starring Hwang Jung-min and Uhm Jung-hwa.

Once childhood sweethearts, Jung-min and Jung-hwa (both of whom use their real names in the film) are now a married couple that are fairly happy, but mostly poor. Jung-hwa put aside her dreams of becoming a pop star to look after their child while Jung-min became a lawyer. When Jung-min accidentally saves a man's life on the subway, he is pushed into the political spotlight and eventually runs for mayor of Seoul. This sequence of events coincides with a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for Jung-hwa to finally live out her dream of

becoming a pop star, as her best friend puts her forward to audition for the reality show "Superstar K." This could be a huge scandal for her husband, so she has to keep it a secret and hope he doesn't find out.

Despite touching on some sensitive social issues, "Dancing Queen" is hilarious, with Hwang in particular giving a strong comedic performance. It wouldn't be a Korean film if it didn't try to make you cry at some point along the way, but the drama is fully justified and helps the narrative along nicely.

I think you would have to have a heart of stone to not get some kind of enjoyment from this movie. Not only is it a touching story that is recognizable in any language, but the film is also genuinely funny and sweet. What could be better than seeing a genuinely nice person try to live out their dream? Two genuinely nice people trying to live out their dreams! Which is exactly what you get here.

GROOVE

Dancing Queen

(댄싱퀸)

Directed by Lee Seok-hun





CAPTURING KOREA

Edited by Jenny Na (jenny@groovekorea.com)

Sunrise over a land where two rivers meet

YEARNING FOR YANGSU

Photos by **John Steele** / Interview by **Dylan Goldby**



Location – Between Dumulmeori and Paldang Dam

Time: 7:42 p.m.

F10, 1/8, 19mm, ISO 100

Shooting at twilight, the 30 minutes or so after the sun goes down, is when the quality of light is at its best and you can get those gorgeous colors in the sky.







Location – Dumulmeori

Time: 6:30 a.m.

F13, 1/60, 17mm, ISO 100

Make sure you know when the sun is going to rise so that you are in position to get the shot. As with all of these shots, a tripod is absolutely necessary to get the sharpest results, as we are dealing with relatively slow shutter speeds.



^
Location – Between Dumulmeori and Paldang Dam

Time: 6:54 p.m.

F16, 1/100, 14mm, ISO 100

3 exposures (-1, 0, +1) – HDR processed

I decided to do HDR with this because I wanted to capture both the vibrance and color of the field of flowers as well as the darkness in the clouds above.

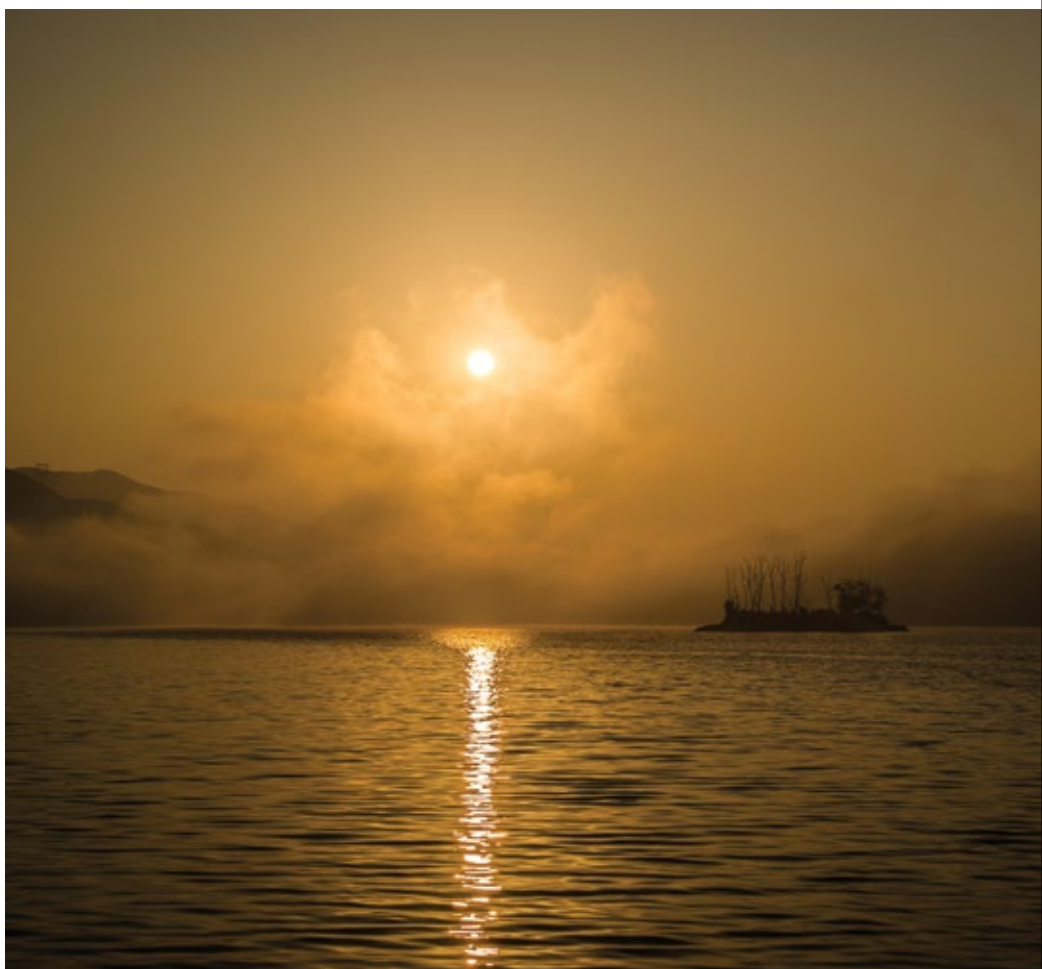
Notice the ropes that lead your eyes into the frame. I like to get a low perspective on this kind of shot by setting the tripod as low as possible, to give the viewer the feeling that they are there, dealing with relatively slow shutter speeds.

>
Location – Dumulmeori

Time: 6:52 a.m.

F13, 1/100, 52mm, ISO 100

We got lucky because of the presence of the mist. Without it, this shot would not have had much impact. But we make our own luck. If you go often enough, you will be rewarded with interesting conditions and get some great shots.



With beautiful mountains and breathtaking sunrises, a visit to Yangsu-ri makes for a perfect trip out of the city. The area is located a little less than an hour east of Seoul where the northern and southern branches of the Han River meet. There are many things to see and shoot here, so make a weekend out of it and go home with some amazing pictures.

Groove Korea: Give us a little introduction to yourself, the man and the photographer.

John Steele: I am originally from Virginia, but have been living and working in Korea since 2002. Currently, I am working in the English Language and Literature Department at Chung-Ang University in Seoul.

I have been interested in photography ever since I came to Korea, at first mainly as a way to share my life and stay in touch with my friends and family back home. This interest has turned into more of a passion the last few years, and I have focused mainly on street and travel/landscape photography skills. I have also been known to shoot an event from time to time, as well as action shots of my 4-year-old Boston terrier, Holly.

You visit Yangsu-ri quite a bit. What is it that keeps you going back there?

Although it's very convenient living and working in Seoul, I love to get out of the city as much as possible to capture landscapes. The Dumulmeori area (두물머리), in particular, where the Namhan River meets the Bukhan River, is where I mainly enjoy shooting. I love it because there are a variety of compositions to explore with interesting foreground, middle ground and background combinations including the boat, the small island, the mountains, the mist and the sun.



Location – Between Dumulmeori and Paldang Dam

Time: 7:22 p.m.

F16, 1/13, 14mm, ISO 100

This caught my eye when I arrived in the area. Notice how the binoculars point toward the sun, leading your eyes in that direction.



^

Location – Dumulmeori

Time: 6:15 a.m.

F13, 1, 130mm, ISO 100

This small island of trees caught my eye, but I wanted to wait until it was surrounded by the incoming mist to add some atmosphere to the shot.

You favor the beginning of the day for your photography, it seems. Which is best at Yangsu-ri, sunrise or sunset?

Although both times of day are great for shooting, this area is mostly known for its beautiful sunrises. This time of year is great to visit and shoot because when the sun rises over the mountains, it's in the same general direction as the boat and the island, providing a stunning background. There are some interesting compositions at sunset as well, but if I had to recommend one, it would no doubt be sunrise.

Any specific gear or technique tips for achieving the photos you do when visiting Yangsu-ri?

Because this area is located on the water, I would suggest an ND filter. That way, you will be able to take long exposure shots by slowing down the shutter speed, which produces a smooth, silky water effect, which is quite pleasing.

Composition is extremely important, as always. Look for foreground elements that will lead the viewer's eyes into the rest of the frame. When shooting landscapes, I usually aim to have a foreground, a middle ground and a background to make more interesting, compelling shots.

Some of our readers don't have their own transportation. How easy is it to get to and, once there, get around the area?

From Seoul, you can take the 167 bus from Cheongnyangni Station, the 88 bus from Sangbong Station or the 2000-1 bus from Gwangnaru Station to Yangsu-ri. You can also take the Jungang Line from Cheongnyangni Station.

In order to catch a sunrise, I would suggest going the night before, getting acquainted with the area and possibly doing a sunset shoot, and camping out or getting a motel or inn nearby as the buses will probably not leave that early in the morning.

GROOVE

See page 105 for a map

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World Gym

Yeoidu [02] 782-1003 / Gangnam
[02] 2052-0096 / Ilsan [031] 932-
7010 / Busan [051] 758-5554
• www.asiaworldgym.com

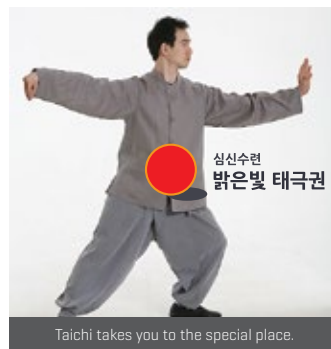
Body & Seoul

010-6397-2662
• www.seoulmartialarts.com

Taich & Qigong Training Academy

010-4477-9684 / 010-6685-8250
• 3-5 floors Bowoo bldg, Bangbae
4-dong, Seocho-gu, Seoul
• www.taichillife.co.kr

Learn how to deal with stress and to
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and healthy Taichi center. The regular
classes are 7 p.m. - 8:20 p.m. on
Mondays and 8:40 p.m. - 10 p.m. on
Thursdays at 100,000 won monthly.
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to 12:30 p.m. on Saturdays at 70,000
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Seoul

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www.hairandjoy.com

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Uniqlo Seven Springs Hongik Univ. station Line2 Exit8

See page 105 for a map

UROLOGY & OB

Tower Urology

[02] 2277-6699 • 5th fl. 119 Jongno 3-ga, Jongno-gu, Seoul

MUSEUMS & GALLERIES

National Museum of Korea

[02] 2077-9000 • 168-6 Yongsandong 6-ga, Yongsan-gu, Seoul
 The NMK offers educational programs on Korean history and culture in English and Korean.

National Palace Museum of Korea

[02] 3701-7500 • 12 Hyoja-ro, Jongno-gu, Seoul
 This museum has a program called 'Experiencing Royal Culture' designed for English teachers to help learn about Joseon royal culture.

Seodaemun Museum of Natural History

[02] 330-8899 • 141-52 Yeonhui-dong, Seodaemun-gu, Seoul
 Don't know where to take your kids on weekends? This museum exhibits a snapshot of the world and animals.

Daegu Art Museum

[053] 790-3000 • 374 Sundeok-dong, Suseong-gu, Daegu
 Art space for local culture presenting Daegu's contemporary fine arts and internationally renowned artists.

National Museum of Contemporary Art, Korea

[02] 2188-6000 • 313 Gwangmyeong-ro, Gwacheon-si, Gyeonggi-do

Leeum Samsung Museum of Art

[02] 2014-6901 • 747-18 Hannam-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul
 10:30 a.m.-6 p.m. Closed on Mondays, New Year's Day, Lunar New Year and Chuseok holidays.

Kumho Museum

[02] 720-5114 • 78 Sagan-dong, Jongno-gu, Seoul
 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Closed on Mondays.

Gallery Hyundai

[02] 734-6111-3 • 22 Sagan-dong, Jongno-gu, Seoul
 It's the first specialized art gallery in Korea and accommodates contemporary arts.
 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Closed on Mondays, New Year's Day, Lunar New Year and Chuseok holidays.

Plateau

[02] 1577-7595 • 50 Taepyung-ro 2-ga, Jung-gu, Seoul
 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Closed on Mondays.

Airang Gallery

[051] 731-0373 • 111 Centum Q, 1483 Woo-dong, Haeundae-gu, Busan
 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Closed on Mondays.
 • arirangallery.com

RESTAURANTS

AMERICAN & BRUNCH

Gobble n' Go

[02] 790-5390 • 118-18 Itaewon 1-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul

R1 Suji's

[02] 797-3698 • 34-16, Itaewon 1-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul

The Flying Pan Blue

[02] 793-5285 • 123-7, Itaewon 1-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul

R3 TG Brunch

[02] 749-8005 • 305-5, Itaewon 2-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul
 This small and friendly neighborhood restaurant offers an affordable homestyle brunch all day.

Blue Crab

[02] 6081-9888 • B1, 112-2, Itaewon 1-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul

Jo's Basket Grill & Dining

[02] 744-0701 • 31-37 Dongsoong-dong, Jongno-gu, Seoul

KOREAN & BBQ

R4 HBC Gogitjib [Itaewon]

[02] 796-5528 • 46-5, Yongsan-dong 2-ga, Yongsan-gu, Seoul

Small Happiness in the Garden

[02] 975-3429 • 28-3 Jeodong 1-ga, Jung-gu, Seoul

Jang Sa Rang

[02] 546-9994 • 624-47 Sinsa-dong, Gangnam-gu, Seoul
 The menu at this traditional Korean restaurant ranges from classic kimchi pancakes and stone pot rice to an array of meats and veggies.

Maple tree house

[02] 790-7977 • [Hamilton Hotel annex 2nd fl.] 116-1 Itaewon-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul

Ondal

[02] 450-4518 • 177 Walkerhill-ro, Gwangjin-gu, Seoul
 Looking to impress a date or a business partner? Head to the premier traditional Korean restaurant in Seoul.

Hadongkwan

This place simply has the best gomtang [beef soup] in Seoul.

Two Plus

[02] 515 5712 • B1 fl. 532-9 Sinsa-dong, Gangnam-gu, Seoul
 Served here is a high-quality beef loin at a reasonable price.

Tosokchon [Samgyetang]

[02] 737 7444 • 85-1 Chebu-dong, Jongno-gu, Seoul
 A popular Korean-style chicken soup with ginseng is popular at this place. Former presidents enjoyed this restaurant. A soup costs just 15,000 won.

THAI & VIETNAMESE

R5 Thai Garden

[02] 792-8836 • 737-24, Hannam-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul

Pho Hoa

[02] 792-8866 • 737-4, Hannam-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul

R6 Le Saigon

[02] 792-0336 • 74-33, Itaewon 1-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul

Yum Thai

[02] 594-7988 • 5-4 Nonhyun-dong, Gangnam-gu, Seoul

ITALIAN & FRENCH

Trevia [Hannam-dong]

[02] 795-6004 • 738-25, Hannam-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul

R7 Trevia [Itaewon]

[02] 794-6003 • 557 Itaewon-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul
 Their pizzas are Roman style; the thin, crispy dough comes out of the oven literally smoking hot.

R8 Le Cigale Montmartre

[02] 796-1244 • 123, Itaewon 1-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul

R9 Pizzeria D'Buzza

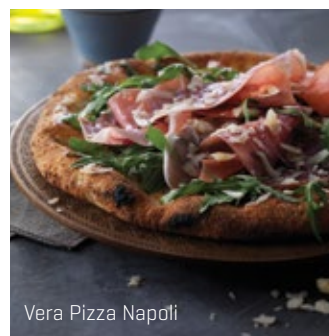
[02] 794-9474 • 743-33, Hannam-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul,
 This trendy joint has a full range of Italian fare. Make sure to make a reservation.

R10 CasaAntonio

[02] 794-8803 • 124-6 Itaewon-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul

Pizza Hill

[02] 450-4699 • 177 Walkerhill-ro, Gwangjin-gu, Seoul
 The first restaurant to serve pizza in Korea.



Vera Pizza Napoli

R17 Vera Pizza Napoli

[02] 796-7223 • 729-74 Hannam-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul
 Fine Italian dining in a casual European style setting. Sticking to traditional Napoli-style recipes, this place is one of the most authentic Italian pizza restaurants in Korea.

MEXICAN & TEX-MEX

Dos Tacos [Gangnam]

[02] 593-5904 • 104 Dessian Luv, 1303-35 Seocho-dong, Seocho-gu, Seoul
 The best and largest taco franchise in Korea, try out their shrimp potato burrito.

R11 Urban Vatos

[02] 797-8226 • 181-8, Itaewon 1-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul
 A unique ambience makes this upscale restaurant an ideal place to fill your stomach with authentic favorites.

GrillStaco

[02] 515-5549 • 519-13 Sinsa-dong, Gangnam-gu, Seoul

On The Border

Shincheon [02] 324-0682
 Yeouido IFC [02] 6137-5682
 Pyeongchon Lotte [031] 8086-9805
 Times Square [02] 2672-0682
 Appujeong [02] 518-0682
 Ilsan One Mount [031] 961-6771
 Hongdae [02] 338-0682
 • www.ontheborder.co.kr Authentic Mexican restaurant with homemade dishes and freshest ingredients with 25 margaritas.



On The Border

Don Charly

[070] 8154-4475 • 225-10 Itaewon-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul
Real Tex-Mex cuisine made by a Mexican chef. A new addition to Gyeongdan gourmet.

CHINESE & JAPANESE

R12 Songhwawon

[02] 794-8522 • 743-34, Hannam-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul
The one and only gochujang tangsuyook (fried pork with red pepper sauce) in Korea.

R13 Gida-sushi

[02] 749-3558 • 683-125, Hannam-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul

Ho Lee Chow

[02] 793-0802 • 119-25, Itaewon 1-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul

Jin Donburi

[02] 2235 1123 • 103-9 Jeodong 1-ga, Jung-gu, Seoul
The chef here trained in Japan and serves an authentic Japanese-style donburi (dongatsu over rice) at an affordable price. Gatsudong goes for 6,000 won.

Hong Jajang

[02] 792-8117 • 34-28 Itaewon-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul
Fried rice, Jajang noodle and crispy fried pork are recommended. Try their cold Jambong, a seasonal favorite.

DONGATSU

Dr. Oh's King-size Dongatsu / O Baksane Dongatsu

[02] 3673 5730 • 131-32 Seongbuk-dong, Seongbuk-gu, Seoul
The place serves dongatsu the size of a car wheel. The restaurant dares you to finish it in one sitting.

Myungdong Dongatsu

[02] 776 5300 • 59-13 Myungdong 1-ga, Jung-gu, Seoul
This is the most popular and oldest Japanese-style dongatsu restaurant in Myungdong. Try the wasabi.

Namsan Dongatsu

[02] 777-7929 • 49-24 Namsandong 2-ga, Jung-gu, Seoul
Since 1992, this casual Korean-style dongatsu restaurant has been a favorites of Namsan hikers and taxi drivers.

INTERNATIONAL

Copacabana

[02] 796-1660 • 119 Itaewon-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul
29,000 won gives you All you can eat of the best Brazilian BBQ in Seoul. Located in the heart of Itaewon, it makes a perfect place to start your night.

Battered Sole

[02] 322-8101 • 52-23 Changcheon-dong, Seodaemun-gu, Seoul
Battered Sole is a relative newcomer, but they serve up some of the best fish and chips in Korea. This is the real deal.

Simply India

[02] 744 6333 • 1-79 Dongsung-dong, Jongno-gu, Seoul

VEGETARIAN

So True

[02] 549 7288 • Jinseong Building, 58-6 Samseong-dong, Gangnam-gu, Seoul. blog.naver.com/julieintoday

Sanchon

[02] 735 0312 • 14 Gwanghun-dong, Jongno-gu, Seoul
www.sanchon.com

Veggie Holic

070 4114 0458 • 204-59 Donggyo-dong, Mapo-gu, Seoul.
www.veggieholi.co.kr

March Rabbit

[02] 3444-4514 • 560 Sinsa-dong, Gangnam-gu, Seoul



March Rabbit



All menu items 10,000 won Steak meal 20,000 won

Without compromising on quality and taste, Bennigan's is the first family restaurant in the business to serve such carefully selected ingredients and the best taste at a flat price.



The smartest way
to spend 10,000 won!

BENNIGAN'S

STEAK & PASTA



See page 105 for a map

DESSERT

R14 Tartine

[02] 3785-3400 • 119-15, Itaewon 1-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul
 Chef Garrett's Tartine features cherry pie, rhubarb pie, butter tarts and so many more. All made in house.

R15 Coffee Chu

[02] 790-6821 • 682-10, Hannam-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul

R16 Takeout Drawing

[02] 797-3139 • 683-139, Hannam-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul

Ben's Cookies

[02] 556-3275 • 124-9, Itaewon 1-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul
 Cookies from the U.K. The best you'll find in Korea.



DAEGU

G'day [American & Brunch]

053-746-1217 • 980-9
 Suseongdong 4-ga, Suseong-gu, Daegu
 This Aussie brunch cafe serves the best brunch in Daegu at the best price.
 • www.facebook.com/CafeGday

The Paris [Italian & French]

[053] 763-8998 • 207-10 Doosan-dong, Suseong-gu, Daegu
 This place offers fine dining in one of the few authentic French restaurants in town.

Dos Tacos [Mexican & TEX-MEX]

[053] 255-4885 • 34-4 Dongsung-ro 2-ga, Jung-gu, Daegu

PAN Asia [International]

[053] 287-7940 • 2 fl., 21-9 Samdeok-dong, Jung-gu, Daegu

South St. [American]

[053] 471-7867 • 664-10 Bongdeok 3-dong, Nam-gu, Daegu

Bagel Doctor [Café]

[053] 421-6636 • Samdeokdong 2-ga, Jung-gu, Daegu

Miyako [Japanese]

[053] 761-5555 • 402-5 Sang-dong, Suseong-gu, Daegu

Beyond Factory [Italian/café]

[053] 255-7614 • 40-63 Daebong-dong, Jung-gu, Daegu

Italy & Italy [Italian / French]

[053] 423-5122 • 22-2, Samdeokdong 1-ga, Jung-gu, Daegu

La Luce [European]

[053] 255-7614 • 40-63 Daebong-dong, Jung-gu, Daegu

Ariana Boccaccio Hotel Brau [Buffet]

[051] 767-7913 • 200-1, Dusan-dong, Suseong-gu, Daegu

Thursday Party [Bar]

21-23 Samdukdong 1-ga, Jung-gu, Daegu

BUSAN

Rock N Roll [Bar]

• 2 fl, 56-5, Daeyeon 3-dong, Nam-gu, Busan

Wolfhound [Irish Pub]

[051] 746-7913 • 2 fl, 1359, U 1-dong, Haeundae-gu, Busan

Fuzzy Navel [Mexican Pub]

[051] 754-6349 • 178-13, Millak-dong, Suyeong-gu, Busan

Farmer's Hamburger [American]

[051] 244-5706 • 35-1 Daechungdong 2-ga, Jung-gu, Busan

The Pho [Vietnamese]

[051] 256-8055 • Saeabusan town, Sinchangdong 1-ga, Jung-gu, Busan

Collabo

The pub, inspired by a New York subway station and Times Square, dons interior decor actually imported from New York, with the best finger foods and reasonably priced cocktails.

• Haeundae branch

C #201 Daewoo Trump World Marine, Woo-dong, Haeundae-gu, Busan

• Gwangan branch

#102 Theme Tower, 179-11 Min-rak-dong, Suyeong-gu, Busan

Paniere[Café]

[051] 817-8212 • 225-1 Bujeon-dong, Jin-gu, Busan

The European-style brunch restaurant/café serves fresh fruit juice and sandwiches.

The Grill On The Beach [Pub]

[051] 731-9799 • B1 fl. Sea star bldg., 1417-2 Jung 1-dong, Haeundae-gu, Busan
 This submarine-themed pub carries international beer and a wide selection of wine.

DRINKS

BEER

D1 Craftworks taphouse

010-7666-1588 • 238, Noksapyeong-daero, Yongsan-gu, Seoul
 The first expat-owned microbrewery in Korea still offers some of the best brews around. Try out their seasonal tastes in a warm and inviting ambience.

D2 Reilly's taphouse

[02] 792-6590 • 3 floor, 123-32, Itaewon 1-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul
 Reilly's Taphouse boasts some 20 draft beers and is committed to carrying the best craft brews from Korea and around the world.



Reilly's taphouse

D3 3 Alley pub

[02] 749-3336 • 116-15, Itaewon-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul

Big Rock

[02] 539-6650 • B1 818-8, Yeoksam 1-dong, Gangnam-gu, Seoul
 This place imports premium beer from Alberta. Its comfortable atmosphere and huge space is perfect for just about every occasion.

D4 Wolfhound [Itaewon]

[02] 749-7971 • Itaewon 1-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul, Korea

Wolfhound [Haeundae, Busan]

[051] 746-7913 • 1359 Woo 1-dong, Haeundae-gu, Busan

COCKTAILS & WINE

Between

[02] 795-6164 • 124-7, Itaewon 1-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul

D5 Noxa

[02] 790-1334 • 671, Itaewon 1-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul
 This cozy neighborhood hangout in Itaewon specializes in cocktails and tapas. Check out DOJO, a downstairs bar with huge variety of alcohol on offer.



Noxa

B1

[02] 749-6164 • 119-7, Itaewon 1-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul

Prost

[02] 796-6854 • 116-1, Itaewon 1-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul

5th Lounge

[053] 764-3579 • 207-10 Doosan-dong, Suseong-gu, Daegu
 This fabulous lounge does just about everything right. If you're in search for space for private parties, this is the place.

Once in a blue moon

[02] 549-5490 • 85-1 Chungdam-dong, Gangnam-gu, Seoul
 A live jazz club Seoul that hosts internationally renowned musicians from Korea and around the world.

SOJU/MAKGEOLLI

Mowmow

070-4078-8862 • 118-71, Itaewon 1-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul

D6 Jeon [전 만량]

070-8749-5004 • 118-18, Itaewon 1-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul

SAKE

D7 Yuda

[02] 388-5081 • 683-126, Hannam-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul

D8 Muntaro

[02] 796-7232 • 683-124, Hannam-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul

NIGHTCLUBS

Octagon

• 175-2 Nonhyeon-dong, Gangnam-gu, Seoul

Vera

• 356-1 Seogyo-dong, Mapo-gu, Seoul

Cocoon

• 364-26 Seogyo-dong, Mapo-gu, Seoul

NB

• 362-4 Seogyo-dong, Mapo-gu, Seoul

Eden

• Ritz Carlton 602 Yeoksam-dong, Gangnam-gu, Seoul

Elune

• 1408-5 Jung 1-dong, Haeundae-gu, Busan

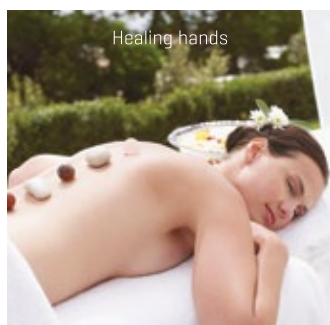
Mass

• 1306-8 Seocho 4-dong, Seocho-gu, Seoul

MASSAGE, SPA & BEAUTY

A1 Healing hands

070-7504-8090 • 3 floor 124-7, Itaewon 1-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul
This ultra-comfortable spa is a Groove favorite. Located on the main drag of Itaewon, an affordable massage here will make your day.



Tiffany's nail

[02] 794-4179 • 123-26, Itaewon 1-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul
Kick back with a cup of coffee or tea and relax while getting a manicure. Choose from over 200 colors.

Hair & Joy

[02] 363-4253 • 3 floor, Hongnam Building, 168-3, Donggyo-dong, Mapo-gu, Seoul

Lucy Hair

[02] 325-2225 • 2 floor, 30-10, Chandcheon-dong, Seodaemun-gu, Seoul

Look your best effortlessly with the help of Lucy. Her internationally trained hair stylists treat your locks with the best hair products in a modern and cozy environment.

SHOPPING

IT

S1 Concierge

[02] 796-3599 • 118-27 Itaewon, Yongsan-gu, Seoul

A premium IT device retail outlet specializing in Apple products.

FASHION

S2 Botisto

[02] 749-1232 • 124-9 Itaewon, Yongsan-gu, Seoul

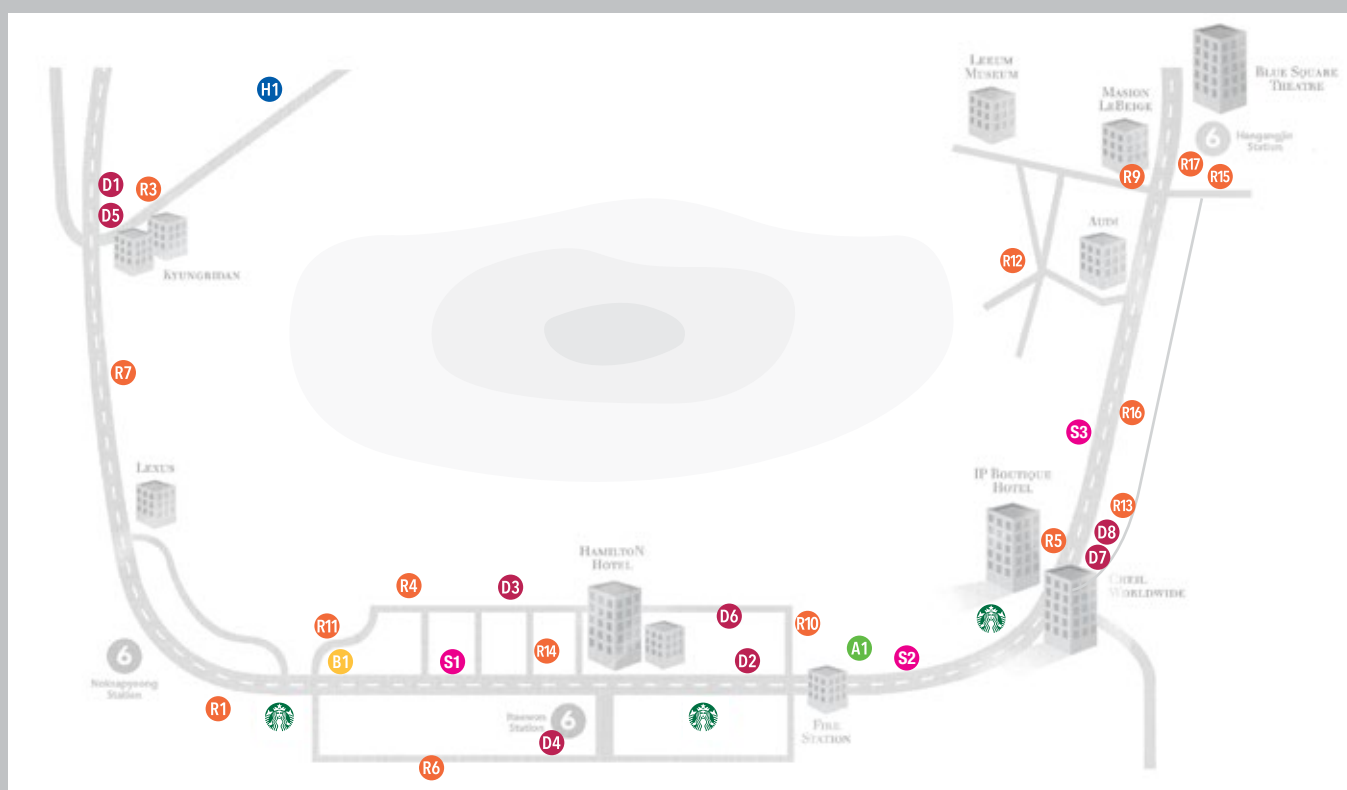
Custom-made Italian shoes for men. Design your own shoes and have them made in Italy according to your feet measurements.



S3 Beaker

[070] 4118-5216 • 738-36 Hannam-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul
Discover a wide array of fashion items by the best international designers including James Perse, Aspesi, Rag&Bone, Vince, Jack Spade and more.

ITAEWON MAP





YONSEI UNIVERSITY
DENTAL HOSPITAL



DONG-HOO HAN, DDS, MSD, PH.D

Professor
Dept. of Prosthodontics, College of Dentistry,
Yonsei University

MINIMAL PAIN, EXCELLENT REHABILITATION OF TOOTH FUNCTION

“ONE COMMONLY HEARD MISCONCEPTION ABOUT IMPLANTS IS A FEAR OF PAIN. IF YOU ARE SUDDENLY SEIZED WITH THIS FEAR, DO NOT WORRY! IMPLANTS HAVE MANY ADVANTAGES AND CAN BE WIDELY APPLIED IN MANY SITUATIONS.”

Although much effort should be put into preserving one's natural smile, an increase in the average person's life expectancy means it has become more common to live without our original teeth in our later years. Even with the help of a removable partial denture (RPD) or conventional complete denture (CD), a decrease in one's chewing ability or some moderate discomfort is unavoidable. As time goes on, the alveolar bone (where the teeth rest in the jaw) begins to reabsorb the teeth and ill-fitting dentures will clatter; the pleasure of eating becomes challenging due to mucosal (or soft tissue) pain. As a result, it has become necessary to develop treatments that minimize damage to the remaining teeth and soft tissue while still being comfortable and functional.

One of such solutions is an implant, or an artificial replacement tooth. The procedure involves a titanium fixture that is placed into the missing tooth area and acts as the root of the tooth. An artificial crown (prosthesis) is attached onto the fixture to re-enable the chewing function. The fixture is then tightly connected to the alveolar bone and serves to continuously anchor the prosthesis inside the mouth.

THE BENEFITS OF IMPLANTS AS COMPARED TO THE DISADVANTAGES OF CONVENTIONAL PROSTHESIS TREATMENTS

Before going ahead with an implant procedure, there are also conventional prosthetic treatments to consider: a fixed partial denture (bridge) for the loss of one or two teeth, and RPD for the loss of many teeth or a CD if one has lost all their teeth. All conventional options, however, can cause damage to the remaining teeth or soft tissue. For the bridge treatment, this means damage to the teeth adjacent to the gap, and for RPD or CD, injury can be caused by chewing on the toothless area, as the remaining teeth and soft tissue covering the residual ridge of missing teeth area can be vulnerable. Furthermore, denture patients can also experience pain or soreness on the

supporting tissue, which often prevents them from eating ordinary food.

Implant prosthesis, by contrast, is a treatment method that minimizes the above-mentioned disadvantages: The survival rate of such a prosthesis is longer, one's food can be chewed more comfortably and the adjacent soft or hard tissues will remain unharmed.

Another advantage of implant prosthesis is that its application field is wide and that the procedure is possible regardless of age after the end of jaw growth. If the patient is free of severe disease (or if existing conditions are well-controlled), no major complications will arise from the surgical procedure. Furthermore, it is unlikely that any major pain will develop after the surgery.

Despite such advantages, many are hesitant to choose implants due to the fear of discomfort. The patient doesn't feel much pain because the surgical area is locally anesthetized and painkillers are prescribed post-surgically.

A SOLUTION TO LOST OR DAMAGED OF TEETH, AS WELL AS DENTURE PROBLEMS

When a molar has been lost or when an anterior tooth has been damaged, an implant procedure can restore the tooth to its original functionality. In the event that all one's teeth are gone, dentures are fabricated in association with implants, and well-fixed dentures will improve one's chewing ability. In the procedure, two to four implants are placed to resolve denture discomfort and it is common for many patients to be able to properly chew after the implant procedure.

The implant procedure used worldwide was first developed in the mid-20th century. It has been practiced for the past 50 years and is proven to be safe. Continuous research has increased the success rate of implants, reducing the healing period and widening the application field. At present, we have reached the level of quality where prostheses are able to be similar in shape and color to one's natural smile.

“The life expectancy of the implant is long, its ability to re-enable chewing ability is superior and it has the advantage of preserving the remaining teeth and adjacent tissues. People hesitate over implant surgery due to the preconception of pain, but in reality, the pain is minimal. Please be at ease.”

For further dentistry information or reservations, please call Ms. Aeri Jo, the English coordinator at Yonsei University Dental Hospital.

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+82 2 363 0396
aerijo@yuhs.ac
50 Yonsei-ro, Seodaemun-gu, Seoul

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en/hospitals/dent_
hospital/Conserv_
dentist/Intro



STARBUCKS OPENS SECOND DRIVE-THRU



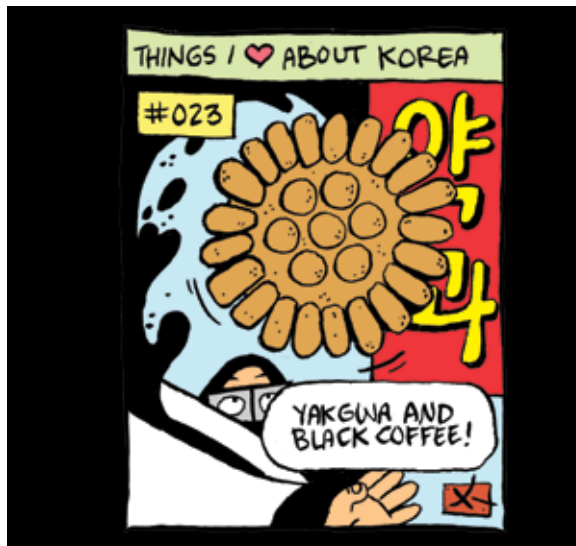
Starbucks opened up its second drive-thru in Ilsan, Gyeonggi Province, after its first in Gyeongju. The Ilsan store, at Baekseok Station.

To celebrate the opening, Starbucks is giving away logo mugs to the first 1,000 customers and customers who donate more than 3,000 won to community centers. The first 10,000 customers will be given car stickers and key rings as opening gifts.

Equipped with a smart-panel drive-thru video order system, the store operates from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. year-round and also has tables inside.

Starbucks aims to open three more drive-thrus within this year.





Comics

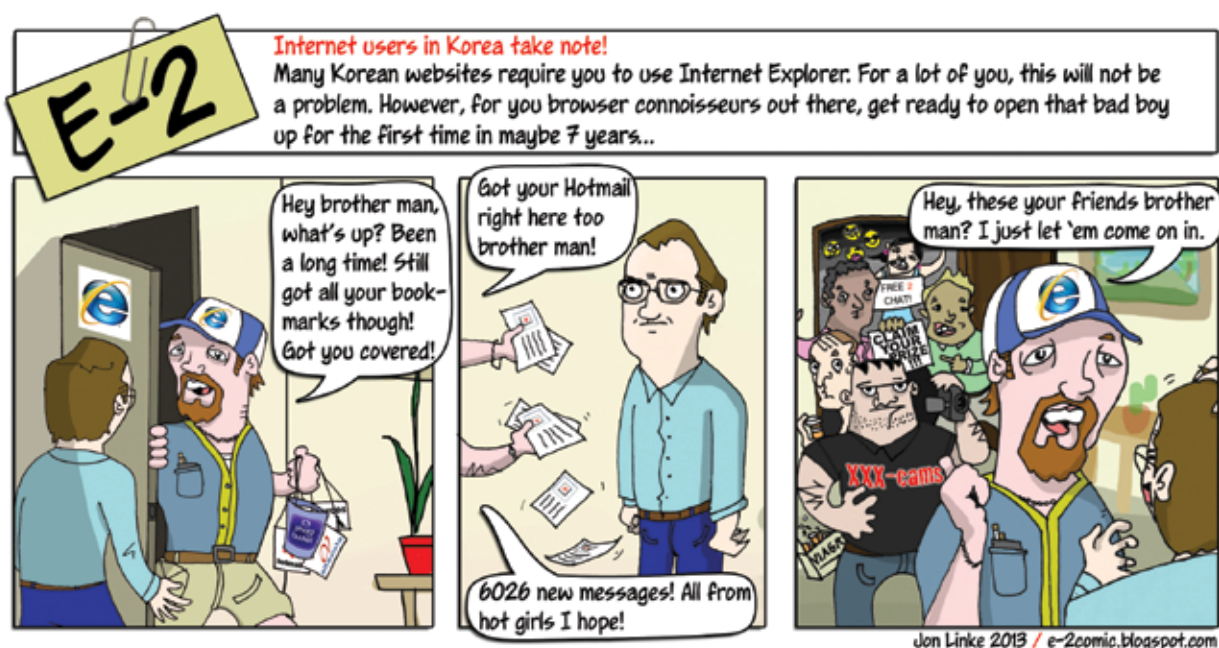
DEAR KOREA



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NEEDS A LESSON IN MODERATION, JEN LEE

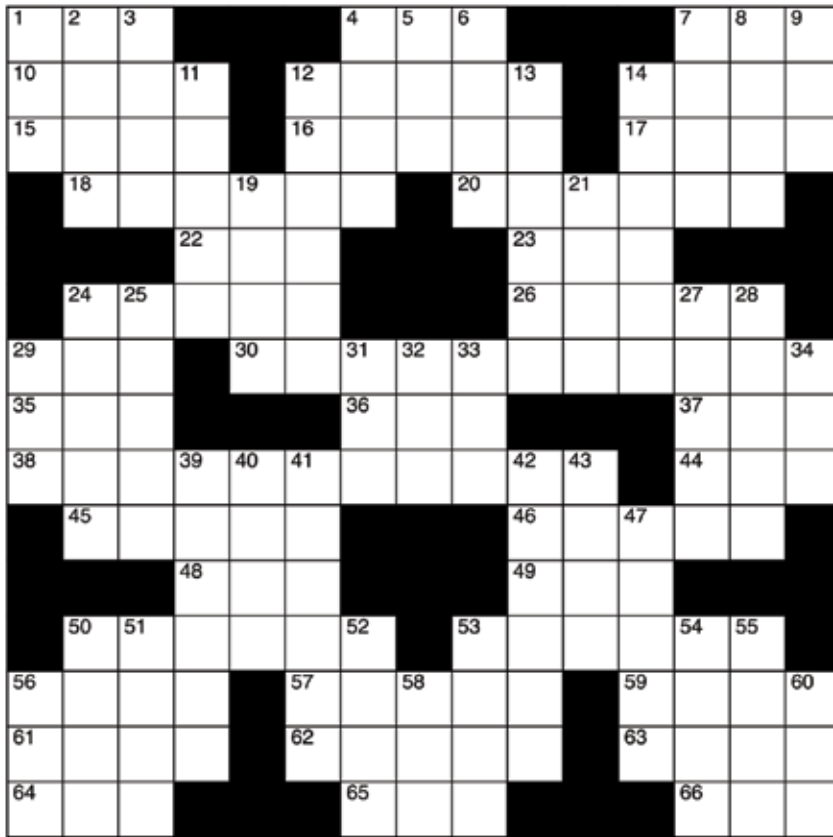


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Games

Crosswords - Sudoku



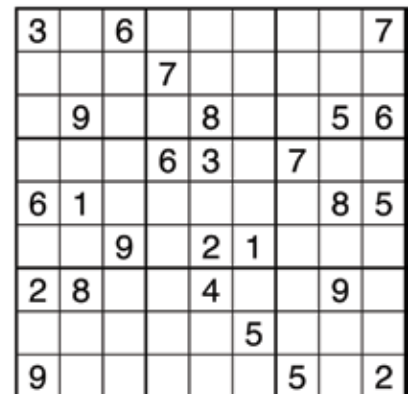
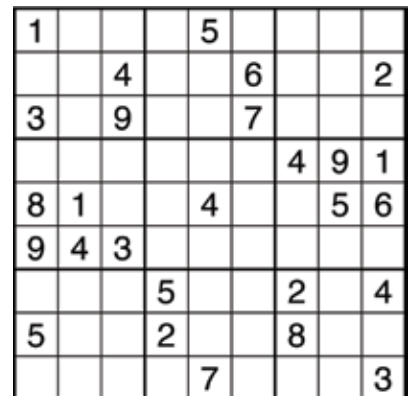
Across

- | | | |
|--|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Easy as 1-2-3 | 23. Women's ____ movement | 50. Elevated |
| 4. Goat and camel hair fabric | 24. Polynesian wrapped skirt | 53. Cristobalite |
| 7. A woman's undergarment | 26. Double-reed instruments | 56. Baseball's Ruth |
| 10. British bathrooms | 29. Own (Scottish) | 57. Indian monetary unit |
| 12. Assemblages of parts into one entity | 30. Summer window dressings | 59. Contest of speed |
| 14. Semitic fertility god | 35. Many not ands | 61. Having a slanted direction |
| 15. Dull & uninteresting | 36. Paddle | 62. Gross receipts |
| 16. Yemen capital | 37. Being a single unit | 63. A river in NE Spain |
| 17. Stare impertinently | 38. Silly behavior | 64. The brain and spinal cord (abbr.) |
| 18. Banished persons | 44. Insecticide | 65. Dynegy Inc. on NYSE |
| 20. Heart failure & energy supplement | 45. A blank area | 66. Japanese monetary unit |
| 22. Reduction in force | 46. Reduces stress | |
| | 48. Morning moisture | |
| | 49. Tear away roughly | |

Down

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Linen vestment worn by priests | 21. Supports trestletree | 42. Baseball playoff |
| 2. The trunk of a tree | 24. Parian Chronicle | 43. Cruise |
| 3. Transmission line cable | discovery site | 47. Steeple |
| 4. Freshwater duck genus | 25. Greek famous for fables | 50. Precipitation |
| 5. Bulk storage container | 27. Farical afterpiece | 51. Cas____; winter melons |
| 6. Oil obtained from flowers | 28. Dispatches by mail | 52. A unit of two |
| 7. Shopping containers | 29. Hall of Fame (abbr.) | 53. Viewed |
| 8. Abnormal breathing | 31. Aah | 54. Taxis |
| 9. Brew | 32. Unnaturally pale | 55. 4840 square yards |
| 11. Bake eggs in their shells | 33. Before | 56. London radio station |
| 12. Serviceable | 34. Fixed in one's purpose | 58. Perform work regularly |
| 13. A person in the navy | 39. Madames | 60. Longest geological time |
| 14. A child's slight injury | 40. Frosts | |
| 19. Fain | 41. City drains | |

*To see the answers, search "Crossword November 2013" on groovekorea.com.



Horoscopes

November



Aries March 20 - April 20

A developing interest in a fellow worker could cause you some headaches on several levels unless you are able to cool it. Office romances seldom follow a smooth path, and if it is serious, one or the other should consider a change of employment, if possible. In health matters, follow the advice of your physician, regardless of the seeming inconvenience.



Taurus April 21 - May 21

Your vacation plans could be spoiled by carelessness involving planning procedures. Pay special attention to such matters as vehicle safety and reliability. Seek to avoid arguments concerning financial matters, particularly with persons who have no direct interest. Romance could take a side-trip along interesting avenues, but caution should be used when a situation involves someone previously committed.



Gemini May 22 - June 21

An old love affair, kept on the back burner for a lengthy period, could either flame up suddenly or die quietly, depending on your reaction to a touchy situation. Individual cases may vary, but the latter course could prove the wisest in the long run for many. Avoid unnecessary arguments with colleagues over credit for minor accomplishments.



Cancer June 22 - July 22

An ability to say the right thing at the right time is to be treasured. But sometimes, it is better to say nothing at all. An urgent appeal for financial help should be handled carefully, but a minor amount of money might prove less expensive than injured feelings. Excitement in romance could be intoxicating, but make sure you view the entire picture before saying yes.



Leo July 23 - August 23

When planning a trip, be sure to make important reservations well ahead of time, confirming them with a deposit if necessary. Steer clear of office malingerers and backbiters, as you may be lumped with them when it comes time to separate the sheep from the goats. Exercise your willpower when it comes to making major purchases of luxury items. If there is no need, there will be little pleasure.



Virgo August 24 - September 23

Precaution is advised when dealing with one whose vision is limited by jealousy. Anything you say can — and probably will — be used against you if things come to a showdown. Romantic plans could go awry if you are unable to overcome a tendency to flirt indiscriminately. Make the most of your talents and let others know of your abilities. Avoid overindulgence in eating or drinking.



Libra September 24 - October 23

This could be your lucky month if you take advantage of the opportunities coming your way. Make sure that you clear up any old debts that might be hanging around and don't neglect an important letter that needs writing. A new love partner could enter your life now, but you may not be able to notice him or her because of being too tied up with inconsequential matters.



Scorpio October 24 - November 22

Get back to nature. Find your pleasures in simpler things and don't be too tied to modern conveniences and frivolities. Expect a certain amount of trouble resulting from an overindulgent appetite. You could avoid some of the problems, however, if you rely on the advice of an old friend. Career matters could improve and you may be in line for a promotion or increase in income if you move fast.



Sagittarius November 23 - December 21

Set your mind to the task and you will find it not nearly as difficult as you thought at first. In dealing with an old flame who no longer ignites you, try to be both gentle and truthful. Operating within your own framework will prove to be much more profitable to you than striking out for unknown fields. Begin a savings plan now, however modest.



Capricorn December 22 - January 19

Your latent creative talents have lain hidden long enough. Now is the time to trot them out and run them up the flagpole. If no one salutes, you won't have lost anything, but if they do, you could be in for some surprising changes in your lifestyle. An excellent chance for matrimony awaits many unmarried Capricorns.



Aquarius January 20 - February 18

A trip to another city or climate could open things up for you and prove to be much more interesting than you had imagined. Stop mistreating your body, particularly with excesses of food and drink, and your general health will improve dramatically. If you are in the mood for romance, don't stand on ceremony and let the object of your affections know how you feel. Career problems may improve suddenly.



Pisces February 19 - March 19

A new business partnership could enhance your earnings if you choose one who is industrious and talented, but do not become involved with those who merely talk a good game. In romantic activity, keep things light and don't commit yourself too early in the game. Parental concerns could be paramount to you, but may become less of a problem if you are frank.



Photo Challenge

This month's challenge: Red



Winner: Paul Morris

Shot in: Oksu-dong, in a light tent with two flashes on a traditional paper mache tray made in Andong

Shot info: ISO 100, focal length 100mm, aperture value f11, shutter speed 1/200

Sponsor: Kasan Camera www.kasancamera.co.kr (02) 771-5711

Compete in the Photo Challenge for a chance to win a 50,000 won voucher from Kasan Camera. Go to the Seoul Photo Club's website for more information:

www.flickr.com/groups/seoulphotoclub



PROMOTIONS

Edited by Sean Choi (sean@groovekorea.com)



Club Med

Winter holiday bonus promotion

The promotion offers up to a 40 percent discount until November when customers book ski or sun resort packages. The sun resorts are Bali, Bintan Island, Phuket, Cherating Beach in Malaysia, Okinawa, Kani and Guilin. Prices start from 1.18 million won. At Sahoro and Yabuli ski resorts, the first 100 people to make reservations will get a one-day free premium ski or snowboard rental service. Prices start from 1.22 million won. A 2 percent additional discount is given for reservations via the website.

For more information, visit www.clubmed.co.kr or contact (02) 3452-0123



Serafina New York

Beaujolais Nouveau promotion

Serafina New York, with stores in Moscow, Sao Paulo, Mumbai and Tokyo as well as NYC, Miami, Philadelphia and East Hampton in the U.S., presents a special promotion in celebration of the 2013 Beaujolais Nouveau release.

The promotion includes a free chef's salad made with the day's fresh vegetables and best ingredients to every customer who orders Beaujolais Nouveau.

Serafina New York was born in New York in 1995, and opened its first Seoul store at Hapjeong. Based on a very authentic approach to northern Italian home-style meals and using only the highest-quality ingredients, Serafina New York delights diners with more than 20 varieties of oven-baked, thin-crust pizzas, made with premium Italian flour, extra virgin olive oil and Sicilian sea salt.

For more store information, contact (02) 3443-1123.



Lawry's The Prime Rib

Grand opening in Seoul

Lawry's The Prime Rib, a world-famous gourmet roast prime rib restaurant with its head office in the U.S., is opening an overseas branch in Seoul in November.

Since its launch in Beverly Hills in 1938, the restaurant has been famous for its extremely strict opening conditions and requirements, to the extent that they have only opened nine restaurants -- in Dallas, Chicago, Las Vegas, Singapore, Tokyo, Osaka, Taipei and Hong Kong -- in its 75-year history. The Gangnam restaurant, which will boast one of the largest seating capacities, accommodating 250 persons on the third floor of the GT Tower at Gangnam Station, will be the 10th Lawry's restaurant in the world.

Its whole prime rib is roasted standing at a low temperature of less than 100 degrees Celsius for a long period of time, which creates the characteristic juiciness and tenderness of the meat and minimizes any resulting oil.

For reservations and inquiries, call (02) 590-2800 or visit www.lawrys.kr.



Sheraton Grande Walkerhill

Camping in the City package

Sheraton Grande Walkerhill is offering a special Camping in the City package until March 31, 2014. The package is a perfect fit for families and couples looking for leisurely camping in Seoul. Make your camping even more adventurous and personal with the Camping in the City package at the Jade Garden, a tranquil forest embracing the scenic camping zone with a complimentary Han River view. Additionally, freshly prepared gourmet barbecue and premium camping equipment, including exotic Indian tents, are all set up. **For reservations and inquiries, call (02) 2022-0000**



Grand Hyatt Seoul

Paris with Love

Paris Grill, the European restaurant at Grand Hyatt Hotel, hosts a romantic lounge party from Nov. 28 with the ambience of Paris 1930s brasseries, the flow of romantic French chanson and an exquisite menu and cocktails served by new chef Marco Mehr will take the audience back in time. A fashion show by the glamorous fur brand Sabatier, live DJ performances and a prize drawing will keep you entertained from 10 p.m. until 1 a.m.

For further information, call (02) 799-8161.



Somerset Palace Seoul

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Somerset Palace Seoul was awarded South Korea's Leading Serviced Apartments' at the World Travel Awards 2013 on Oct. 1. The World Travel Awards were established in 1993 to acknowledge, reward and celebrate excellence across all sectors of the tourism industry. The WTA has developed into the most prestigious and comprehensive awards program in travel and tourism, and is recognized worldwide as the hallmark of industry excellence.

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PROMOTIONS

Edited by Sean Choi (sean@groovekorea.com)



JW Marriott Hotel Seoul

Thanksgiving dining

To celebrate Thanksgiving on Nov. 28 this year, JW Marriott Hotel Seoul will be serving a special selection of turkey dishes at its grill and buffet restaurants. Buffet restaurant The Café will be adding roast turkey and other holiday dishes to the menu at its regular Thursday seafood buffet. Mashed potatoes, roasted pumpkin and desserts including pumpkin pie will add to the Thanksgiving spirit. JW's Grill has prepared an authentic Thanksgiving main course of herb butter-roasted turkey with gravy, cranberry sauce, traditional walnut stuffing, an assortment of roast vegetables – beet, carrot, onion and potatoes – and a side dish of mashed potatoes. Guests booking the family set menu, which serves four to six, receive a whole turkey, carved and served at the table by one of JW Grill's own chefs. "Turkey to Fly" ready-roast turkey sets are also available from Nov. 28 to Dec. 25 at the Deli Shop at JW Marriott Hotel Seoul to be enjoyed at home.

For inquiries and reservations, call JW's Grill at (02) 6282-6759, The Café at (02) 6282-6731 and The Deli Shop at (02) 6282-6738.



Lotte Hotel Busan

Warming up the chilly season

Momoyama, a Japanese restaurant located on the 43rd floor of Lotte Hotel Busan, promotes shabu shabu and sukiyaki in November. The best-quality Korean beef, fresh vegetables and ingredients dipped in Gomadare or citric ponzu sauce will warm you up in even the chilliest of seasons. The menu items are priced 109,000 won.

For reservations and inquiries, (051) 810-6360



Park Hyatt Busan

Michelin star guest chef

A Michelin-starred guest chef Michelino Gioia introduces homemade pasta specialties and various promotions, and offers a la carte dishes, a lunch set, a dinner special, Sunday brunch, a cooking class and a gala dinner at Park Hyatt Busan's Living Room restaurant from Nov. 21-30. With this divine promotion that lasts for 10 days, guests may enjoy Chef Gioia's stylish and exclusive homemade pasta as well as his signature dishes for Sunday brunch on Nov. 24. Moreover, a pasta cooking class by Chef Gioia will reveal secret recipes. On Nov. 29, the Michelin star chef gala dinner presents a luxurious five-course menu in collaboration with Chef Gioia and Stefano Di Salvo, executive chef of Park Hyatt Busan. Chef Gioia, born in Campania, Italy, started his professional career at the Four Seasons in Milan and later at the Hotel Eden in Rome. He is well known for his stylish and exclusive cooking skills as executive chef since 2003 at the famous one-star Michelin signature restaurant The Cesar at the boutique hotel La Posta Vecchia in Rome.

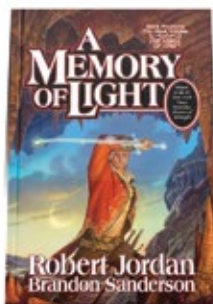
For information and reservations, call (051) 990-1300.



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